UNSETTLING FICTIONS:

COLONIALITY AND RESISTANCE IN CONTEMPORARY NATIVE AMERICAN AND SOUTH AFRICAN LITERATURES

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The candidate confirms that the work submitted is their own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

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Abstract

This thesis is the first full-length study to comparatively explore Native American and South African literatures. It advances a method of reading that enables a productive comparison of contemporary fiction written by Native American and black and coloured South African authors. It is my contention that post/de-colonial, Indigenous and African studies must be brought into dialogue in order to better understand how literature can be used to resist ongoing forms of colonial oppression. By comparing literary responses to conditions of racial, gendered and environmental forms of injustice, I reconceptualize distinct experiences of colonial violence under capitalist globalization as fundamentally interconnected. In doing so, I consider the potential of the novel as a relational object to bring into being new modes of relationality between selected others. Bringing Native American and South African literatures into dialogue with one another allows for parallels and contrasts to be drawn between different postcolonial contexts. This enables a more holistic understanding of different conceptualizations of postcoloniality and indigeneity in different global spaces.

The chapters in this thesis reveal South African and Native American experiences as always interpellated by coloniality. Yet, I argue that we can read these literatures together, not only through their shared negotiation of the enduring effects of coloniality, but also through what I identify as a shared grammar of resistance. This is rooted in the decolonial recovery of alternative knowledges, narrative forms and ways of being. The novels in this study are situated within distinct literary traditions of resistance, but by bringing them together I argue for a relational framework that registers the implicit and explicit connections across the texts. For, while settler colonial nation states can be understood in relation to one another, I argue that resistance movements – and specifically literatures of resistance – can also be understood through a logic of relationality. This project brings together what I identify as strategies of 'unsettling' and their uses within literature: from the ways that literature is being used to *un*settle settler colonial mythologies and commodified narratives of indigeneity, to the potential of non-Western worldviews to disrupt colonial knowledge systems. This study examines how these novels unsettle dominant narratives that have been reproduced in distinct geopolitical spaces through the logic of coloniality. In tracing the ways that Native American and South African authors undertake this work, I register the potential of literature to bring about disruptive transformation. The new readings of novels generated by this discussion contributes to a decolonization of our intellectual engagement with literatures, politics and culture in the contemporary moment.

Contents

Introduction

In 1910, following the Act of the Union in South Africa, the country's newly formed government sent a delegation to the United States and Canada. Specifically, they sought to study the reservation system in order to better understand colonial strategies for the suppression of Indigenous populations.[1] This visit ultimately served to bind the countries as co-constituted settler colonial nation states.[2] The South African government subsequently developed the reserve system which, in the mid-twentieth century, became 'homelands' or 'bantustans'. As such, "the American 'reservation' became the South African 'reserve'" (Mamdani, 12). Mahmood Mamdani notes that this dynamic enables us to read America less as an exception and "more as a pioneer in the history and technology of settler colonialism", as all "the defining institutions of settler colonialism were produced as […] technologies of native control in North America" (12). In South Africa, the colonial government employed this strategy to relocate black populations according to ethnic group, while providing white settlers with access to a surplus of cheap labour. This seldom-recalled historical exchange enabled the separatist policies that were the necessary forerunners to a system of apartheid in 1948.[3]

One of the prevailing claims of this study is that we can connect the two contexts, not only by their histories of settler colonialism, but also through contemporary conditions of oppression that can be understood as new manifestations of colonial violence. With the fall of South African apartheid in 1994 and the overturning of major oppressive legislature targeting Native Americans[4] in the 1970s-90s, the contemporary period can ostensibly be

[1] Following dominant conventions in Indigenous studies, I capitalise the word Indigenous when referring to specific populations or groups of people in order to mark the word as a proper noun.
[2] I understand settler colonialism as different from other forms of colonialism "in that settlers come with the intention of making a new home on the land, a homemaking that insists on settler sovereignty over all things in their new domain" (Tuck and Yang, 5).
[3] Later in the twentieth century, US support for the apartheid government during the Cold War served to further bind the two nations into the mid-twentieth century. The white government's support for the United States during the early Cold War meant that South Africa became a key ally. Crucially, South Africa's agreement in 1950 to produce uranium ore exclusively for the US and England meant that the Union was "central to American national security policy" (Borstelmann, 4). Exploitative racialised labour and processes of resource extraction in South Africa thus materially contributed towards the continuation of settler colonialism in the United States.
[4] Native American is a collective noun and functioning political identity for the Indigenous peoples of the United States, with the exception of the Indigenous peoples of Hawaii. Unlike 'American Indian', it

seen as one of post-oppression in both societies.[5] However, an examination of ongoing conditions of systemic violence – and corresponding expressions of resistance – reveals how traditional forms of colonial subjugation have intensified through neocolonial processes of exploitation and expropriation.[6] In South Africa, over twenty years since white-minority rule ended, "South Africans continue to inhabit manifestly unequal and segregated material worlds" (Samuelson, *Remembering the Nation,* 11). Inequality manifests with particular clarity with regards to land ownership in the country and Bloomberg reported in March 2018 that roughly 95 percent of the country's wealth remains in the hands of ten percent of the population (Gumede and Mbatha). In the context of the United States, the fundamental colonial structure of Federal Indian law has remained intact including the foundational Marshall Trilogy, with its destructively generative "doctrine of discovery" (*Johnson v. M'Intosh* [1823]) and its definition of the tribes as "domestic dependent nations" (*Cherokee Nation v. Georgia* [1831]). Further, progressive Acts such as the Indian Child Welfare Act (1978) and the American Indian Religious Freedom Act (1978) have been unevenly applied and have not necessarily stopped various forms of persecution from taking place.

Understanding the ways that colonial forms of oppression manifest in the contemporary moment requires attending to how coloniality intersects with capitalist globalization. While offering selected groups the prospect of economic development, increased mobility and technological advancement, the uneven global expansion of capitalism causes many Indigenous and postcolonial populations to exist in situations of heightened vulnerability. Accordingly, Stuart Hall argues that capitalist globalization should be understood as "a structure of global power, and therefore of global or transnational inequalities and conflicts rather than the basis of a benign cosmopolitanism" (Hall and Werbner, 345-6). To understand how this manifests in North American and South African

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includes Alaska Natives. However, its usage remains contested, with many favouring American Indian as a collective term (see Russel Means, 1996). I use Native American as a collective noun when referring to the Indigenous peoples that reside in the United States and Indigenous North American to refer to those that reside across the United States and Canada.

[5] Oppressive policies in the United States targeting Native Americans were relaxed from around 1970 onwards, during the period that has been characterised by Native American self-determination: a policy shift championed by President Nixon, who recognised that the prior era of Termination and Relocation (1940s-60s) had been a failure. Throughout this period, key legislation included the Indian Civil Rights Act (1968), which ensured the provision of the Bill of Rights to tribal peoples and recognised the failure of official policies of assimilation; the Indian Financing Act (1974); The Indian Child Welfare Act (1978), thus ostensibly putting an end to assimilationist policies that removed Native children from their communities; and The American Indian Religious Freedom Act (1978), which intended to end persecution stemming from the practicing of cultural traditions. However, the efficacy of many of these acts has been questioned, while the Indian Civil Rights Act was effectively reversed in *Santa Clara Pueblo v. Martinez* (1978).

[6] Neocolonialism refers to the way that capitalism and cultural imperialism have largely replaced the more direct colonial forms of military or political control by which one power asserts or maintains control over an area or group of people.

contexts requires attending to how the legacies of settler colonialism intersect with the rise of neoliberal capitalism. To give just one example, federal support in the United States for the extractive industries results in the heightened vulnerability of certain Native American communities to various environmental risks including unclean drinking water and, for women, the increased risk of sexual assault.[7] In South Africa and the United States, the neoliberal state reproduces conditions of environmental precarity that are an intensification of the environmental disruption that is integral to the colonial process. I understand environmental precarity to refer to the disproportionate vulnerability to the effects of environmental degradation, pollution and climate change that many Native Americans and non-white South Africans face as a result of the combined effects of colonial legacies and the increased influence of neoliberal capitalism on the nation state.

Incidents such as the Marikana massacre in 2012 and the violent shut-down of the #NoDAPL movement at Standing Rock in 2017 exemplify the imbricated forms of sudden and "slow violence" (Nixon, 2011) that render certain bodies precarious under the neoliberal state. Slow violence as a concept encapsulates forms of environmental degradation, the effects of which develop over long temporal scales, while also allowing for the inclusion of its physiological consequences for human and non-human populations. The events at Standing Rock and Marikana are characterised by the prioritization of corporate interests over life (both human and non-human) – interests that are all too readily defended by the state with armed force.[8] While these specific examples are tied to conditions created by the twenty-first century extractive economy, they can be understood on a broader continuum of colonial violence. As Lakota historian Nick Estes argues: "What happened at Standing Rock was the most recent iteration of an Indian war that never ends" (10). Yet, Estes's words also demand that we consider the long tradition of Indigenous resistance to colonial domination. In recent years, grassroots movements such as 'Rhodes Must Fall',[9] '#FeesMustFall' 'Idle

[7] The 2019 National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) found there to be substantial evidence of a relationship between resource extraction projects and violence against Indigenous women. While this investigation focused on Canada, these findings are pertinent to the United States, where Indigenous women face increased risk of violence when in proximity to extractive zones. However, the issue is yet to be acknowledged in any meaningful way by the US government.

[8] In both incidents, armed forces were called upon to protect the interests of extractive corporations. Marikana, which began as a workers' strike at the platinum mine owned by British company Lonmin, resulted in 34 mineworkers being killed and 78 wounded. At Standing Rock in North Dakota, water protectors comprising Indigenous activists and allies protesting the pipeline gathered from October 2015 – February 2016, until the Oceti Sakowin camp was cleared in a military-style takeover, with aggressive use of rubber bullets, dogs and water cannons in sub-freezing temperatures.

[9] The South African protest movement Rhodes Must Fall started in 2015, campaigning for the removal of a Cecil Rhodes statue at the University of Cape Town. It has since led to a wider campaign to decolonise higher education across South Africa, and beyond. The '#FeesMustFall' movement, started in the same year at the University of Witwatersrand, successfully campaigned to stop the South African government from increasing tuition fees in 2016.

Mo More',[10] and '#NoDAPL'[11] have built upon historic anti-colonial struggles to challenge ongoing colonial conditions and modern-day forms of oppression. Anti-extractive movements led by Indigenous groups across the United States and Canada – exemplified by the opposition to the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL), the Keystone Pipeline and the TransCanada Pipeline – resonate in South Africa, where local communities are locked in intense legal struggles with multinational corporations seeking to build mines on their ancestral land.[12] Finding new international platforms through technologies such as social media, these movements highlight issues around land access and repatriation, socio-economic equality, and environmental justice. Though each responds to specifically rooted concerns, the transnational and transcultural resonance of these movements reflects the *global* scope of ostensibly local struggles. Observing the rise in African anti-extractive activism, for example, Abena Ampofoa Asare writes that the "struggle against the Dakota pipeline extends far beyond US national borders" ('Africa to Standing Rock', 2016). Following this, we can perceive how *local* struggles reverberate *globally*, opening up the possibility of liberatory solidarities. This can be understood in the context of Estes's assertion that where "colonizing nation states tend to exist in relation to each other […] liberation struggles also exist in relation to each other" ('Indigenous Studies'). Returning to the historic example I highlighted at the beginning of this chapter, it is not enough to locate the way that settler colonial states operate in relation to and uphold one another. Rather, we must also attend to the forms of influence and exchange that occur, both directly and indirectly, across movements of resistance.

This thesis is the first full-length study devoted to the comparison of Native American and South African literatures. Though these bodies of work are more commonly discussed within national frameworks and different academic traditions, I argue here for a more expansive comparative framework that evades some of the limits of postcolonial and Indigenous studies methodologies. I begin this study with a discussion of these historic and contemporary forms of colonial violence in order to ground my study in the socio-political contexts with which I am engaged. While the focus of this work is on literature, it is not possible to undertake this analysis without attending to the conditions in which these forms of writing were produced. Native American and South African literatures (a term which I

[10] The Indigenous rights movement Idle No More started in Canada in 2012 and has since spread transnationally, gaining international attention and support from global Indigenous groups.
[11] The '#NoDAPL' movement developed in response to plans to build the Dakota Access Pipeline just north of the Standing Rock Sioux reservation in North Dakota. The movement spread internationally beyond the physical space of the camp, garnering expressions of solidarity and material manifestations of support from allied groups and individuals around the world.
[12] In November 2018, the Amadiba community in Xolobeni won a decade-long battle to preserve their way of life against Transworld Energy Mineral (TEM), a subsidiary of Australian mining company MRC.

take to include both oral and written) have always been created in dialogue with contemporary political realities. In turn, social and political struggles in these contexts – from the anti-apartheid movement to the American Indian Movement – developed through a mutual engagement with waves of artistic production. The struggles that I reference above build upon concerns that have been highlighted in South African and Native American literary production over centuries. Much contemporary literary fiction by Native American and black and coloured South African authors draws on these historical traditions of resistance to speak to the question of futurity.[13] Such concerns are frequently registered through thematic engagements with the legacies and transgenerational memories of colonialism; questions of socio-economic and environmental justice; and the recovery of traditional languages, aesthetic forms and worldviews. And yet, while it is not unusual to see studies focused on the intersections between African American and South African political struggles and expressions of resistance, it is far rarer to find a study comparing Native American and South African contexts. This is, I suggest, in part due to dominant modes of disciplinary categorization that have, at times, served to prevent productive lines of connection from being drawn. While rooting analysis within the local specificity of each context, the comparative focus of this study foregrounds the distinct but interconnected experiences of disenfranchised groups across the Global North and South. As such, I argue for the necessity to look beyond local and even hemispheric contexts.

This project brings together what I identify as strategies of 'unsettling' and their uses within literature: from the ways that literature is being used to *un*settle settler colonial mythologies and commodified narratives of indigeneity, to the potential of non-Western worldviews to disrupt colonial knowledge systems. Unsettling, as K. Wayne Yang and Unangax scholar Eve Tuck assert, is integral to the decolonial project. For, decolonization must involve not only the repatriation of land, but also "the recognition of how land and relations to land have always already been differently understood and enacted" (Tuck and Yang, 7). For Jamaican philosopher Sylvia Wynter, unsettling the coloniality of power is about disrupting the overrepresentation of a Western bourgeois conception of the human, "on whose basis the world of modernity was brought into existence" (260). This thesis takes Wynter, Tuck and Yang's formulations as points of departure, focusing on the potential for literature to unsettle, not only racialised and gendered formations of the human, but also the cultural and spatial narratives imposed by colonisers on peoples and their lands. Colonialism

[13] Coloured is a collective noun and functioning political identity used in South Africa as an ethnic label to denote people who possess (often mixed) ancestry from Europe, Asia, and various Khoisan and Bantu ethnic groups. Under apartheid, 'Coloured' was a separate racial classification with restricted rights for those that didn't fit into a binary racial formation, including people of Khoikhoi and San heritage.

must be understood as an inherently disruptive process – not solely in terms of physical disruption that is a consequence of processes of dispossession, but crucially in the violent rupture of existing social, political and knowledge systems. These literatures bear witness to such processes of disruption that have too frequently been erased from dominant narratives. Yet they also unsettle the colonial structures that continue to shape conditions of subalternity. Adopting this language, Sisseton Wahpeton scholar Kim TallBear writes that "Indigenous people […] unsettle settler relations in courageous ways". For TallBear, this takes shape in the work that "Indigenous people do to defend the earth in order to have a chance at (re)constituting good relations with our other-than-human relatives" ('Yes, Your Pleasure!'). I am interested here in how literature specifically can perform unsettling acts that work to disrupt the logic of coloniality that structures capitalist modernity. This study examines how the novel unsettles dominant narratives, from historic settler-colonial narratives reproduced through the archives; to the exoticised narratives of indigeneity that circulate through capitalist globalization; and, finally, the ontological and epistemological foundations of coloniality that disavow pre-existing modes of being and knowing. In tracing the ways that Native American and South African authors undertake this work, I register the potential of literature to bring about disruptive transformation.

Beyond Disciplinary Boundaries

The focus of this study is literature. Yet, my approach draws on a range of fields that are themselves interdisciplinary, bringing various theoretical frameworks to bear on selected South African and Native American works of fiction. Jace Weaver has argued for the necessity of an Indigenous studies that is explicitly interdisciplinary, spanning "history, literary criticism, religion, philosophy, sociology, and anthropology-and subdisciplines within them" in order to "achieve something approaching a complete picture of Natives, their cultures and experiences" ('More Light than Heat', 235). Though speaking with regard to the complexity of Native American cultures, Weaver's assertion is equally significant in terms of how we think about South African literature. Accordingly, this project builds on and speaks to theoretical approaches from across Indigenous studies, postcolonial studies, world literature, African studies, settler colonial studies and the environmental humanities. In turn, I develop these discourses by analysing two sets of literature that are seldom explored in the same frame. As such, I posit an alternative framework for the analysis of global Indigenous and postcolonial literary studies that offers methodologies for productively thinking through these points of connection.

I argue that disciplinary rubrics have contributed to the kind of siloing that limits comparative connections being made among writings by marginalised populations in

different parts of the globe. By troubling boundaries that exist within the field of literary studies, I comparatively examine present-day manifestations of colonial violence and parallel expressions of resistance in distinct geopolitical spaces. Interrogating these categories offers the opportunity to reassess the political structures and identities that they perpetuate, making it possible to foster new solidarities between particular groups. This comparative process can be understood as a decolonial methodology, following Kenyan author Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o's criticism of the Western academy for its tendency to put "things in compartments, resulting in an incapacity to see the links that bind various categories" ('Borders and Bridges', 119). As a result of this "inherited tradition" of categorization, Ngũgĩ writes, "we are trained not to see connections between phenomena" (119). The Enlightenment desire to categorise sits in marked contrast to animist and relational worldviews, which frequently advance a more holistic understanding of the world. It is with Ngũgĩ's provocation in mind that I reach across borders and, in doing so, make connections between histories, literatures and cultures that are rarely explored in relation to one another.

This study contributes to a wider project being undertaken by literary scholars across postcolonial and Indigenous studies, including Jodi Byrd (2011), Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o (2012), Chadwick Allen (2012) and Steven Salaita (2016), that seeks seek to understand entwined experiences of colonialism across diverse geographic, cultural and temporal spaces. While I am mindful of the cultural contexts in which theoretical approaches have been produced, an exciting potential of this comparative work is discovering their pertinence to different contexts. As I demonstrate, Indigenous theoretical frameworks frequently offer valuable insight into South African contexts, just as South African frameworks allow for a new way of analysing for Native American contexts. By concentrating on the benefits of these alternative analytic frameworks, I do not seek to de-emphasise the importance of an analytic approach that is informed by the locally specific contexts in which texts were produced. However, one of the consequences of the divide between postcolonial, Indigenous and African studies is that scholarship in these fields has been, at times, quite isolated. There is a lack of engagement, particularly in postcolonial studies with the work of Native American contexts. Conversely, I open up the frame of analysis in order to reveal shared conversations and insights that can be brought to bear on different contexts.

In the remainder of this introduction I consider the reasons that these connections have seldom been explored, setting out a rationale for a comparison that moves beyond inherited categories, while negotiating the issues that it presents. First, I discuss how Native American and South African literary traditions can be understood as canons of resistance, tracing some of the foundational texts in order to situate my discussion of contemporary literature. Following this, I undertake a review of postcolonial and decolonial discourse,

considering the opportunities as well as limitations offered by these approaches when applied in these specific contexts. I argue that a conceptualization of coloniality enables a fuller understanding of the ways that colonial legacies continue to resonate in capitalist modernity, as it attends to the "long-standing patterns of power that emerged as a result of colonialism, but that define culture, labor, intersubjective relations, and knowledge production well beyond the strict limits of colonial administrations" (Maldonado-Torres, 'On the Coloniality of Being', 243). Here, I provide my rationale for employing coloniality as a key term in this study, which I argue can be productively applied to understand the enduring ontological and epistemological, as well as material, legacies of colonialism in the United States and South Africa. Next, I argue that an engagement with decolonial theory allows us to address how selected Native American and South African literary texts reveal and disrupt the legacies of colonialism. I situate this theoretical approach in relation to contemporary socio-political discussions surrounding decolonization in North America and South Africa, before outlining my own decolonial method of relationality. As I argue, this offers a productive way to comparatively read literatures from geopolitically distinct spaces while creating space for heterogeneity. In the penultimate section, I consider the category Indigenous, paying close attention to the different manifestations of indigeneity in different global spaces. In doing so, I outline the rationale for moving beyond what Chadwick Allen understands as a "trans-Indigenous" framework. Finally, I undertake a review of the structure of this thesis, introduce the chapters and the novels that they focus on.

In the chapters that follow, I illustrate the potential for modes of reading *across* that might increase capacities for thinking relation beyond existing scholarly categories. I employ the notion of relationality, informed by the worldviews of selected Native American and South African cultures, as a methodology in order to read these ostensibly disparate literatures in relation to one another. This approach is also informed by activist praxis, following a rise in creative expressions and material manifestations of transnational and transcultural solidarity in recent years. To quote the scholar-activist Angela Davis:

> I think that we constantly have to make connections. So that when we are engaged in the struggle against racist violence, in relation to Ferguson, Michael Brown, and New York, Eric Garner, we can't forget the connections with Palestine. So in many ways I think we have to engage in an exercise of intersectionality. Of always foregrounding those connections so that people remember that nothing happens in isolation (70).

Davis's emphasis here is on the connections between geopolitical manifestations of racial violence, but her call for intersectional thinking can be expanded upon to look for further points of connection – both in structures of violence, as well as expressions of resistance. This sentiment resonates not only with this thesis but also with many of the novels in this study. In advancing this expansive approach, then, I am guided by the literature that is the focus of this study. From Zoë Wicomb's gestures towards shared experiences of trauma between African American and South African women in *David's Story* (Chapter One), to the growth of transcultural decolonial movements in Leslie Marmon Silko's *Almanac of the Dead* and K. Sello Duiker's *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* (Chapter Three), South African and Native American literatures attest to the connectedness of global experiences of subjugation and expressions of resistance in ways that demand us to look beyond exclusionary categories such as race or nationality. Considering these points of interconnection in literature is valuable – not only to better understand the ways in which literary concerns and strategies reverberate across global networks of circulation but also to attend to points of overlap in ongoing decolonial efforts and expressions of resistance, in order to work towards creating a space for co-resistance.

Following Māori scholar Alice Te Punga Somerville's theorization of comparative Indigenous Studies, I am mindful that:

> Comparative work does not (and indeed, given the attention Indigenous Studies pays to specific land and specific place, it must not) insist that a "fair" comparison needs to focus on the objects of comparison in exactly the same way or to the same degree. When comparative methodologies insist that engagement must be "equal" they privilege the idea of an objective view in which the scholar's job is to step back and survey things from afar (cited in Allen, xviii-xix).

It is therefore important to note that, as I am not an Indigenous or African scholar, my interpretations of the texts cannot attempt to provide authoritative readings of their cultural specificities. My approach is inevitably grounded in my background in the British academy, but also reflects my training in the radical traditions of Native American studies and Africana studies, the challenging and generative conversations that I have had with scholars from these fields, and the time I have spent on Haudenosaunee land. While the degrees to which I engage with South African and Native American literatures vary throughout this study, my work aims to uncover moments of connection in a way that emphasises their fundamental relationality. Before turning to the texts, I will situate my study in the context of Native

American and South African literary canons, then outline the key theoretical paradigms that constitute my approach.

Canons of Resistance

While Native American and South African literary cultures did not originate within a Euroamerican print culture, following European colonization Native American and non-white South African authors began to appropriate Western written traditions – and specifically the English language – for political means. Through the mid-to-late twentieth century, the anti-apartheid movement – like the Red Power and American Indian Movements – was influenced by and, in turn, inspired waves of artistic and literary output. While enforced literacy and the use of the English language were first employed in the United States and South Africa as colonial technologies, written English has been creatively adopted by Native American and non-white South African authors as a tool to serve their own needs.

In South Africa, this tradition is epitomised by *Drum*, the magazine that originated as colonial propaganda but went on to become a key vehicle in the 1950s-60s for documenting the atrocities of apartheid and voicing anti-colonial resistance.[14] The writers of the *Drum* generation, including prominent authors such as Can Themba, Henry Nxumalo, and Lewis Nkosi, built upon a South African literary tradition of political advocacy that can be traced back to Sol Plaatje's landmark 1916 text *Native Life in South Africa.* The first book of its kind to have been written by a black South African, *Native Life* is notable as a politically motivated and global-facing text, written in direct response to the passing of the Natives Land Act in 1913.[15] As the first major segregationist policy passed by the Union, the dispossession that this Act facilitated "caused poverty which is still prevalent" in South Africa today (Modise and Mtshiselwa, 359). As Leepo Modise and Ndikho Mtshiselwa note, "[m]any South Africans, especially black South Africans, are trapped in a cycle of poverty that emerged as a result of our history of colonialism and apartheid" (359). Visiting Great Britain as part of a delegation of the South African Native National Congress, Plaatje appealed to the British government for their support in repealing the legislature that disenfranchised the majority of black South Africans from owning land. Written to appeal to a British sense of responsibility to its former dominion, the text he produced played a

[14] As a platform, *Drum* facilitated the articulation of anti-colonial resistance in South Africa and beyond. In addition to having a sizeable South African readership, copies of *Drum* were distributed to African countries including Kenya, Ghana, Nigeria and Sierra Leone.

[15]A Tswana speaker, Plaatje was fluent in seven languages, though primarily wrote in English, enabling him to circulate his work and correspondingly his political concerns beyond South Africa. This strategy allowed him to place himself in dialogue with other transnational black thinkers, including W. E. B. Du Bois, who he cites in the Prologue to *Native Life.* The *Drum* writers continued this transnational dialogue, through a sustained engagement with writers of the American civil rights movement.

critical role in this campaign. In documenting opposition to the legislature, as well as charting the damaging effects of the Act, Plaatje attributed to black South Africans a meaningful political agency that they had previously been denied. This history of protest writing has shaped the contemporary literary climate of South Africa. Yet, it is worth noting that this is largely a masculine tradition, epitomised by *Drum*: a magazine which had very few women contributors and the content of which "tended to reinforce male authority over women" (Clowes, 179).[16] The patriarchal tradition of South African protest writing is reflective more broadly of the way that historic South African resistance movements have tended to suppress women's voices – a concern that I discuss in detail in relation to *David's Story* in Chapter Two.

By contrast, women authors have played an instrumental role in developing Native American tribal literary traditions. This is particularly apparent with regards to the movement known as the Native American Renaissance. From the 1960s onwards, there was an outpouring of literary works from Native writers, thinkers, and artists of different tribal backgrounds, including Silko, Gerald Vizenor (Anishinaabe), N. Scott Momaday (Kiowa), Vine Deloria Jr (Standing Rock Sioux), James Welch (Blackfeet), Joy Harjo (Muscogee), Paula Gunn Allen (Laguna Pueblo), Louise Erdrich (Ojibwe) and Simon Ortiz (Acoma Pueblo).[17] The novels, poems and theoretical works from this period shaped the modern landscape of Native American literature, asserting the survival of Native cultures and countering toxic colonial narratives of erasure. Literary production during this era marked an intensification of a Native tradition of literary political advocacy, which can be traced back to the colonial era. As with South Africa, we can find numerous examples throughout history of Native Americans employing print forms to articulate resistance to colonial subjugation. In *Why Indigenous Literatures Matter,* Cherokee author and scholar Daniel Heath Justice considers literature to be "just one more vital way that we have countered […] forces of erasure and given shape to our own ways of being in the world" (xix). An early example of this is the *Cherokee Phoenix,* the first Native American newspaper, published from 1828-34. Like Plaatje's *Native Life,* the *Cherokee Phoenix* came about as a direct response to the threat of legislation that facilitated land dispossession. The newspaper arose following federal and state pressure placed on the Cherokee Nation to surrender their territory to Georgia, cemented through the Indian Removal Act in 1830. Though the Act ultimately led to the

[16] There were of course a number of women writing during this period, the most notable of whom is the coloured South African/ Botswanan author Bessie Head. For a brief time, Head worked for *Drum's* sister publications the *Golden City Post* and *Home Post*, before her exile to Botswana in 1964. Her most influential works were written during her exile, including the novel *A Question of Power* (1973).

[17] While in a South African context the term 'Native' is considered derogatory due to its colonial history, in the United States this term is commonly used by Indigenous peoples to self-identify. When I use this term, therefore, I do so to refer to the North American context.

Cherokee being removed from their land, in what has come to be known as The Trail of Tears, "the *Phoenix* and its supporters, along with strong leadership and the use of federal courts, held off Cherokee removal for another eight years after the act was originally passed" (Ross-Mulkey, 125).[18] Through publishing the newspaper, the Cherokee appropriated a traditionally Western written form as a tool for political advocacy. Strategically, the *Phoenix* was concerned with portraying the Cherokee as more 'civilised' to Euroamerican settlers by evidencing their literacy. Yet it also served as a hub for correspondence, thus playing a crucial role in enabling communication between members of the Cherokee nation. Furthermore, it enabled the assertion of Cherokee nationalism and spread awareness of their plight to a wider audience.[19] As such, the *Phoenix* evokes a tension that Justice attributes to Native literatures more broadly, writing that they "are at least as concerned with developing or articulating relationships with, among and between Indigenous readers as they are with communicating our humanity to colonial society" (xix). Here, Justice highlights the *relational* dimension of literature, which should not be lost in the emphasis on how literature can be used as a tool for resistance. Rather, taking seriously the question of how literature is used in the service of resistance necessitates a consideration of how writing serves as a *connective* force between and across cultural, temporal and geographical distances.

Accounting for the significant role played by Indigenous literatures in the ongoing struggle against colonialism, Justice notes that "they've been part of our cultural, political, and familial resurgence and our continuing efforts to maintain our rights and responsibilities in these contested lands" (6). As scholars including Justice note, literature has served as a vital mode through which Indigenous peoples have countered processes of subjugation. This is a process that is also articulated by authors themselves. Silko, whose novel *Almanac of the Dead* is discussed in Chapter Three, understands her writing to be "the most effective political statement I could make" (cited in Arnold, 63). This impetus is shared across many postcolonial contexts. In *Postcolonial Ecocriticism*, Graham Huggan and Helen Tiffin observe how postcolonial authors have historically employed literature as a mode of "global consciousness-raising" in overt forms as well as "more indirect forms such as novels, poetry and plays" (33). The examples of "protest literature" recounted above are significant, particularly here in terms of how such texts influenced the development of South African and Native American literary traditions in ways that remain evident in the contemporary period. However, these texts are not merely vehicles for the advocacy of thematic concerns.

[18]Along with the Cherokee, the 1830 Act dispossessed other Southeastern tribes including the Choctaw, Chickasaw, Muscogee, Seminole and Ponca.

[19]The newspaper was published in English and Cherokee languages, using newly invented Cherokee syllabary, and reached an international readership.

Huggan and Tiffin caution against "succumbing to an instrumental view of literature" as self-consciously shaped by specific political aims (14). While acknowledging that postcolonial and environmental writing is frequently "directed towards specific goals (e.g. the desire to protect wilderness, or to promote the rights of abused animals and/or peoples)", they argue that "to label such writing as either 'advocacy' or 'activism' risks underestimating its aesthetic complexities" (33). Accordingly, they posit that any analysis of these literary forms should recognise "the aesthetic function of the literary text while drawing attention to its social and political usefulness" (14). Interpreting South African and Native American literature, then, requires being attuned to the entanglement of aesthetics and politics.

It is also necessary to note that, through this framing, I am not suggesting that Native American and South African literatures are merely reactive. Though frequently employed in response to the challenges created by colonial experiences, Native American and South African literatures and literary traditions predate colonialism. Stories are, and have always been, integral to the survival of the diverse cultures that exist across these spaces. As Justice asserts: "while Indigenous writers have confronted that oppressive context and created a richly expansive literary tradition that engages with colonialism, these traditions are in no way determined *by* colonialism" (6, emphasis in original). By highlighting these traditions of resistance, indeed by making it a key term for this study, I am not suggesting that this is always a component of Indigenous/postcolonial literatures. Neither am I ascribing an inherently oppositional stance to Indigenous/postcolonial writers, though this is increasingly becoming a market expectation, in line with Huggan's assertion that, "in the overwhelmingly commercial context of late twentieth-century commodity culture, postcolonialism and its rhetoric of resistance have themselves become consumer products" (6). In recent years it has become more common for writers to refute this framing, some even rejecting being labelled as an Indigenous author for the associations that it carries.[20] I am, however, recalling these literary histories to position this study in relation to genealogies that continue to influence authors in the contemporary moment, many of whom are using literature in order to foreground – or otherwise problematise – forms of oppression that are inseparable from colonial legacies. In his 'Letter to a Just-Starting-Out Indian Writer - And Maybe to Myself', Blackfeet author Stephen Graham Jones situates himself in relation to this genealogy, while highlighting the distinct forms of oppression confronting Indigenous peoples in the contemporary moment:

[20] The Blackfoot author Stephen Graham Jones has vocalised opposition to being labelled in this way. He writes: "When the audience or the market or the critics refer to you as an 'American Indian writer,' this is an attempt to dismiss you, to preserve you on a shelf, to prepare you for display" ('Letter', xviii).

> This isn't the Native American Renaissance. That was a great and essential and transformative movement […] but that was a different generation, with different issues. You're not resisting falling dead off the back of a horse anymore […] You're not resisting the invisibility that comes from colonial mythmaking so much as you're resisting the voicelessness that comes from commodification. What you're resisting is headdresses on Reebok shirts" (xi).

Jones's emphasis on how Indigenous cultures are commodified speaks to just one of the ways that capitalism and coloniality intersect. This concern, which is similarly pertinent to certain South African cultures, serves as the focus for my analysis in Chapter Two, centred on novels by Zakes Mda and Thomas King.

This thesis examines the literary strategies employed by Native American and South African authors to reveal and disrupt the logic of coloniality that continues to structure experiences of precarity. By comparatively reading a selection of novels for their aesthetic and thematic innovations, I argue that contemporary Native American and South African authors utilise a shared grammar of resistance. Focusing on textual engagements with traditional languages, narrative forms and epistemologies, I identify shared strategies adopted by authors writing from across these geopolitically and culturally distinct spaces. By elucidating these connections, this comparative work demands that we reconsider how coloniality continues to structure the contemporary world. As such, it offers suggestions as to how literature can serve to build bridges for those working to resist ongoing global structures of oppression. In outlining these intersections, I am not suggesting that the two traditions developed through interactions that, together, directly shaped one another. Rather, my discussion of the historical development of political writing in both contexts shows two parallel traditions of politically engaged writing, that were responding to interconnected structures of coloniality, though not necessarily in dialogue.[21]

While documented exchanges between Native American and South African groups are infrequent, commonalities between their experiences have been acknowledged over the years. Nelson Mandela, in particular, remains an iconic figure to many Native Americans, who saw their own struggle mirrored in the anti-apartheid movement. After his release, Mandela visited the United States in 1990, where he acknowledged the American Indian movement and the struggle of Native American peoples, who he referred to as "the first American nation" ('Talking Feather'). Since his death, activists have observed how Mandela's

[21] It is worth noting that both South African and Native American literary and political traditions have had shared influences – a key one being the African American civil rights movement.

legacy acts as an inspiration to Indigenous peoples in the United States. In 2013, the imprisoned political activist Leonard Peltier (Turtle Mountain Chippewa) paid homage to Mandela for demonstrating "the possibilities of how a continued struggle by indigenous people could manifest itself in levels of freedom that have been marred by centuries of oppression" (cited in Rickert). Drawing a connection between the two settler colonial spaces, Peltier points out that "[o]ur Native people suffered the same types of oppression many times" (Rickert). Yet, though there have been points of contact and expressions of solidarity across the two groups, this has not been the sustained level of exchange characterised, for example, by South African and African American artists, authors and thinkers.

It follows, then, that Native American and South African literary traditions, as well as the traditions of literary criticism responding to each, largely developed in distinction from one another. Yet, in the context of capitalist globalization, a sphere of indirect exchange and influence is facilitated through the global movement of people, commodities and data. In his introduction to *The World, the Text, and the Indian*, Scott Richard Lyons observes that Native American cultures have always been active within such processes of circulation, though they have undoubtedly intensified since the late twentieth century. Consequently, he argues:

> tribal/national contexts are themselves always already 'global' in character, […] there is no real possibility of a separate textual or critical sphere divorced from global forces (cultural, economic, political), no possibility of a practice purely disassociated from global networks of production, circulation and consumption (Lyons, 1).

We can understand South African and Native American traditions as independently developed grammars of resistance that, in our more globalised age, have come to interact and overlap. The circulation enabled through the world literary marketplace and the increasingly global scope of academic fields of study, such as postcolonial studies and Indigenous studies, is a major contributor to this. While always circumscribed by the limitations of capital and the conditions of the literary marketplace that determine readership along lines including language, economic status and location, this process offers the generative potential for exchange. I am reminded of Laurelyn Whitt's recognition of the "integrative power of stories", which she argues helps "us initiate and maintain relationships with others who may appear different from us" (36). It is also important to note that by referring to these traditions, I do not suggest that 'Native American literature' or 'South African literature' entail singular literary traditions. Rather, Native American literature is an inherently multi-tribal and multi-cultural category. In South Africa, too, there are cultural distinctions that preclude any simplistic understanding of a unified South African literature.

In the sections that follow, I introduce the key theoretical approaches that pertain to my analysis, mindful of the specific concerns that arise when bringing these contexts together.

From (Post-)Coloniality to Decoloniality

This thesis departs from traditional postcolonial studies projects with its emphasis on decolonization, which I examine through an engagement with theoretical approaches from Indigenous, African and decolonial studies. As with postcolonial studies, these fields have developed through a sustained critique of empire, yet they are not always in dialogue with one another. My emphasis on decolonization is informed by the contexts themselves, where activists, authors and scholars are employing decolonial rhetoric in order to resist persisting conditions of colonial violence. Therefore, while for the most part I employ a postcolonial framework, it is important to note the limitations of this approach, as well as the complexities involved in its application, which I briefly review here. As noted already, the lack of academic engagement thus far between Native American and South African writing can largely be attributed to disciplinary boundaries. The traditions of postcolonial studies and Indigenous studies evolved in different academic contexts, which is likely a factor in postcolonial studies having "virtually ignored American Indian communities" (Cheyfitz, *Columbia Guide,* 4).[22] More broadly, however, postcolonial studies' omission of literature produced in the United States has been criticised by scholars including Peter Hulme and Amy Kaplan, who observes that "the absence of the United States in the postcolonial study of culture and imperialism curiously reproduces American exceptionalism from without" (Kaplan, 17).[23] Consequently, the continental expansion of the United States is often treated "as an entirely separate phenomenon from European colonialism of the nineteenth century, rather than as an interrelated form of imperial expansion" (Kaplan, 17). In this study, then, my approach situates the United States firmly in the context of a transnational web of settler colonialism, which is inseparable from the European imperial project.

In Native American studies, even though "various U.S. Native writers have articulated the indigenous predicament in precisely (post)colonial terms", there has historically been significant resistance regarding the adoption of postcolonial theory – particularly its poststructuralist/postmodernist branches – advanced by Native literary

[22] Postcolonial studies emerged largely in the context of the Commonwealth and in response to the Asian, African and Caribbean anti-colonial movements of the mid-twentieth century. American Indian studies, before expanding into Indigenous studies, originally developed separately in North America following the activism of the American Indian Movement in the late 1960s-70s and inspired by the literature that came to be referred to as the Native American Renaissance.

[23] The ideology of American exceptionalism stems from the idea that the United States had a unique historical and political formation rooted in ideologies of manifest destiny, republicanism and liberty, which renders it incomparable to other nations.

nationalist writers, such as Crow-Creek Sioux scholar and author Elizabeth Cook-Lynn (Cheyfitz, *Columbia Guide,* 4). Chickasaw scholar Jodi A. Byrd and Michael Rothberg summarise the tensions between postcolonial and Indigenous studies as deriving from

> indigenous people's sense of living under ongoing colonial projects – and not just colonial legacies – and from postcolonial studies' over-reliance on models of colonialism in South Asia and Africa that do not necessarily speak to the settler colonies of the Americas, Australia and New Zealand (Byrd and Rothberg, 1).

Yet scholars, including Cheyfitz and Byrd, have increasingly argued for the applicability of certain strands of postcolonial theory to Native American contexts and even of the necessity of incorporating Indigenous contexts into the field, asserting that "indigenous peoples must be central to any theorizations of the conditions of postcoloniality" (Byrd, *The Transit of Empire*, xiv). This stance is reflective of a wider shift in Native American studies in recent years, away from a position of Native literary nationalism towards transnationalism.[24]

In the 1990s, scholars similarly questioned the applicability of postcolonial theory to the South African context. Echoing parallel discussions across Indigenous studies, scholars debated whether it ought to be rejected, as a "foreign, homogenising, ahistoricising, 'poststructuralist' import" or be reinvented in South African terms (Attwell, ix). Though South African literature has generally come to be included as part of the postcolonial canon, this presence is largely dominated by celebrated white South African authors. Authors such as Nobel Prize winners J. M. Coetzee and Nadine Gordimer have tended to set the tone for how South African literature is engaged with in a global context.[25] Frequently read in the context of the country's political situation, during the anti-apartheid period South African literature was considered in terms of how it engaged (or failed to engage) with the struggle. Post-1994, it has been read in terms of what it says about the transition, the country's attempts to reckon with its past and what its future might look like. Thus, South African literature is often read in a national frame, or within the continental context of African literature. Increasingly, it is also not uncommon to see studies focused on the interconnections between African American and South African literatures, histories and cultures. African American studies, like Native American studies, has similarly been excluded

[24] This is not to suggest that transnational Indigenous studies did not exist prior to the recent 'transnational turn' within the discipline. Duane Champagne and Jay Stauss called in 2002 for Indigenous studies to be approached from a hemispheric (rather than national) framework. Other notable earlier examples include works by Elvira Pulitano (2007), Arnold Krupat (2013) and the 2011 special issue 'Sovereignty, Indigeneity, and the Law' (Duthu et al.), which takes a distinctly comparative lens.
[25] It is worth noting that 'whiteness' does not function in the same way for both: Coetzee comes from Afrikaner parentage, while Gordimer has Jewish heritage.

from the postcolonial canon. Yet, as Ronit Frenkel and Andrea Spain demonstrate in their 2017 special issue of *Safundi* on 'Circulating Sense: Writing in and between South Africa and the USA', there are ample grounds for such a comparison to be made.[26] They write:

> We are not arguing for a theory of replications between South Africa and America but are rather trying to highlight the transnational connections that create another layer of cultural meaning that reveals a sort of ephemeral archive, to borrow Ann Cvetkovich's term, undergirded by the idea that "America" is still visibly marked by the after effects of slavery and South Africa is still visibly marked by the after effects of apartheid (Frenkel and Spain, 202).

However, by only focusing on African American and South African connections – a comparison primarily grounded in an analysis of race – these projects fail to register the full implications of what a more expansive study of the United States and South Africa could offer. An emphasis on slavery obfuscates the legacies of (ongoing) colonialism in the United States and the struggles of Native Americans, while a dominant focus on apartheid masks the originary violence of settler colonialism in South Africa. Accordingly, I build on their work to theorise the connections between these contexts with an emphasis on the significance of Native American literatures.

Though both are shaped by histories of settler colonialism, considering South African and Native American literatures within a postcolonial studies framework poses immediate concerns. Postcolonial studies has been the subject of a number of critiques, many of which centre on how it is used "to mark the final closure of a historical epoch, as if colonialism and its effects are definitively over", as well as its failures to account for the place of capitalism in modern day manifestations of colonialism (Hall, 244-5). Following cultural studies theorist Stuart Hall, I understand "postcolonial time" as referring to "the time *after* colonialism", while remaining attuned to the fact that, though different nations are not postcolonial "*in the same way* […] this does not mean that they are not 'post-colonial' *in any way*" (242-6, emphasis in original). Understanding the United States and South Africa in terms of their postcoloniality requires that we take into account the "textured postcoloniality" of both countries (Attwell, 1). This concept foregrounds the overlapping, palimpsestic histories of colonialism in both spaces, taking into account autochthonous

[26] Other recent studies on African American and South African cultural production include *Langston Hughes and the South African Drum Generation* (2010) edited by Shane Graham and John Walters; and *Grounds of Engagement* (2015) by Stéphane Robolin.

cultures, European settler cultures, and diasporic histories of immigrants and arrivants.[27] Much like Byrd's conceptualization of "cacophony", it emphasises the need to move beyond a narrow Indigenous-settler binary, mindful of the uneven and intersecting ways that coloniality is experienced by different groups of people – even within an ostensibly singular space such as the nation state (*The Transit of Empire,* xiii).

Following Marxist anti-colonial thinkers such as Martiniquan psychiatrist Frantz Fanon and Guyanese scholar-activist Walter Rodney, colonialism should be understood as inseparable from capitalism. Decolonization, then, is always necessarily anti-capitalist. Understanding the ways that colonialism continues to influence countries that have gained independence – or, in the case of the United States and Canada, remain settler colonies – demands attention be paid to how the legacies of colonialism intersect with global capitalism. The work of the Warwick Research Collective (WReC) draws on world-systems theory and the theory of combined and uneven development to offer a generative example of how postcolonial literary studies can illuminate these intersections.[28] Their work explicitly seeks to reframe colonialism through interrogating its relationship to the capitalist world-system. The two, they argue, are indivisible as it is only "as the direct result of British and European colonialism, that we can speak both of the *capitalisation* of the world and of the full *worlding* of capital" (Deckard et al., 15, emphasis in original). Departing from existing definitions of the term, they use (the hyphenated) 'world-literature' to formulate:

> A single but radically uneven world-system; a singular modernity, combined and uneven; and a literature that variously registers this combined unevenness in both its form and its content to reveal itself as, properly speaking, world-literature (Deckard et al., 20).

Another branch of theory that seeks to understand capitalist modernity through the context of colonialism is that advanced by decolonial theorists, including Wynter and Latin American scholars Aníbal Quijano and Walter Mignolo. Like the WReC, decolonial theorists emphasise the role of European imperialism in the global dispersion of capitalism. However, they

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[27] The term arrivants, preferred by Jodi A. Byrd, draws attention to the power dynamics at work in the histories of migration, distinguishing the agency of 'settlers' from that of slaves that were forcibly transported into settler-colonial spaces

[28] The WReC's conceptualization of world-systems theory is developed in dialogue with the work of Immanuel Wallerstein (1974, 1980, 1989), used to refer to a bounded social universe that is, for the most part, autonomous and integrated. They understand the capitalist world-system to be unique for the way that it is dispersed globally, therefore simultaneously a world-system and *world* system (Deckard et al., 8). The theory of combined and uneven development has been developed by Engels, Lenin and Trotsky. Employing this concept to understand what they regard as a singular and unequal world-literary system, the WReC are in dialogue with Frederic Jameson and Franco Moretti (Deckard et al., 10).

foreground the concept of *coloniality* as indivisible from modernity. Quijano argues that what we have come to call "modernity" refers specifically to a mode of space/time inaugurated by European imperialism and the concomitant institutions of the nation-state, the bourgeois family, the capitalist corporation, and [...] Eurocentric rationality" (543). Crucially, along with the new machinations of capitalism, this framing emphasises other material and ideological legacies of European colonialism. As such, the term "coloniality of power" describes the persistence of white supremacy and Eurocentrism. I find this approach to be more convincing than that articulated by the WReC which, in its overriding emphasis on capitalism, fails to sufficiently interrogate the plurality of colonialism's histories and enduring legacies.

Decolonial theory's emphasis on the epistemological components of coloniality/ modernity offers a productive framework for this study. Through literature, South African and Native American authors negotiate the legacies of colonial hegemonic discourse – that which asserted Europe's "geo-historical and body-social configurations as superior", rendering the social, political and economic systems of the colonised societies 'primitive' (Mignolo and Tlostanova, 208). In the United States and South Africa, this process enabled European powers to establish themselves as the centre of legitimate knowledge, thereby justifying colonialism as a civilising mission. In his work, Puerto Rican scholar Nelson Maldonado-Torres expands upon this to emphasise the *ontological* legacies of coloniality, observing that "colonial relations of power left profound marks not only in the areas of authority, sexuality, knowledge and the economy, but on the general understanding of being as well" ('On the Coloniality of Being', 242). This position incorporates what Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o calls "decolonising the mind", but specifically distinguishes between the need to interrogate and reframe ontologies as well as epistemologies. The implications of this are traced throughout the literature of this thesis – from the way that settlers disavowed Indigenous ontological relations with the land (Chapter One), to the disruption of socio-political structures of pre-colonial societies, which fundamentally altered conceptualizations of the self, sexuality and gender (Chapter Three).

Decolonial theory is thus framed as offering a departure from postcolonial studies, as it specifically attends to the ways that coloniality survives and exceeds formal colonialism. Coloniality provides a productive lens through which to understand how enduring (material, ontological and epistemological) colonial legacies collide with global modernity. Positioned as a "delinking" project that can lead "to a de-colonial epistemic shift", decolonial theory attempts to bring to the foreground "other epistemologies, other principles of knowledge and understanding and, consequently, other economy, other politics, other ethics" (Mignolo, 'Delinking', 453). Mignolo's notion of delinking arguably frames decoloniality in essentialist

terms, by creating a binary between colonial (European) epistemologies and non-Western epistemologies. As Christopher Shaw has asserted, his work risks conflating the ontological and political, as it relies on the very racialised categories set by occidentalist discourse that decolonial theorists seek to critique (199). Yet, the emphasis of decolonial theory on *praxis* echoes Indigenous critiques of postcolonial theory that emphasise its failures to sufficiently engage with "the actual deconstruction of oppressive colonial systems" (Cook-Lynn cited in Weaver, 232). Mignolo's decolonial project has also been critiqued for "generalizing the experiences of decolonization and anticolonial struggles in Asia, Africa, and Latin America as well as the experiences of the *damnés*, the wretched of the earth, into a new epistemic frame" (Cheah, 'The Limits of Thinking in Decolonial Strategies'). Following this, some scholars have doubted whether this theoretical model can 'travel' beyond its Latin American origins, while others including Maldonado-Torres have demonstrated its applicability to other geopolitical contexts, such as South Africa (Howe, 165). Cognizant of these debates, my work emphasises the need to attend to heterogenous experiences of colonial oppression and decolonial resistance, as well as considering the implications when sufficient space is not created to allow for such differences. As I show in the chapters that follow, coloniality productively allows us to understand the varied colonial legacies in South Africa and the United States, as well as the points of overlap between their decolonial struggles.

Valences of Decoloniality

My understanding of decolonization is informed through an engagement with Indigenous North American, African and Latin American theorists. There can, of course, be no singular understanding of decolonization – as with experiences of colonialism, decolonization is always locally specific, though indivisible from global elements, actors and influences. Nevertheless, there exist commonalities between decolonial struggles. Though it is "impossible to generalise about the decolonial needs of each Indigenous community", as Cherokee scholar Qwo-Li Driskill observes, there is a value in discussing decolonial approaches from across different cultural or global contexts (70). Doing so, it becomes "possible to imagine *together* what decolonization means and could look like, within our particular political contexts" (Driskill, 70, emphasis added). Following Driskill, I argue for the need to contemplate distinct literary engagements with coloniality in the same frame, while remaining conscious of the specificities of each. We can understand decolonization to be a necessarily imperfect and dynamic process. This fluidity is reflected in the construction of the word – the *ization* – which allows us to think of decolonization as an ongoing operation, rather than an idealised destination. This process requires continuous motion, working to recover alternative onto-epistemologies, reform social, economic and political

institutions that reproduce uneven power relations and reorient the self in relation to others (human and non-human) – a dynamic that will necessarily be fluid.

In recent years, discussions around decolonization have surged in academic, political and activist circles globally. Though it has widely different resonances dependent on the social, geographic and temporal context, decolonization is a term that activists and scholars are employing in various parts of the world. Moves to 'decolonise the curriculum' or 'decolonise universities' have gained prominence globally, and particularly in the United States, Canada and South Africa. However, these campaigns have been critiqued for failing to attend to structural legacies of colonialism and for obscuring more 'material' decolonization efforts, such as land repatriation and remuneration. Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang (2012), writing from the context of North America, argue against what they see as the increasing "metaphorization" of decolonization. They write that the term "is not a metaphor for other things we want to do to improve our societies and schools" (Tuck and Yang, 1). Instead, decolonization means nothing less than "the repatriation of Indigenous land and life" (1). Pointing to the potential areas of conflict between different "decolonizing" movements, Tuck and Yang argue: "As important as their goals may be, social justice, critical methodologies, or approaches that decentre settler perspectives have objectives that may be incommensurable with decolonization" (1). This means that, while valuable, campaigns to "decolonise the curriculum", for example, in universities that sit on unceded Native territories may be at odds with decolonial efforts to repatriate the land to its traditional owners. They point to the United States and other settler colonial contexts as spaces where decolonization is uniquely "fraught, because empire, settlement and internal colony have no spatial separation" (7). Discussing the way that different groups are unevenly affected by structures of coloniality, they highlight how a rhetoric of decolonization in settler colonies can frequently lead to an erasure of Indigenous peoples. And yet, while Tuck and Yang raise critical concerns writing from a settler colonial context shaped by centuries of Federal Indian law and a treaty-based system, their critiques of movements pertaining to the decolonization of higher education cannot be neatly transferred to a space such as South Africa, where grassroots movements such as "Rhodes Must Fall" and "#FeesMustFall" form an integral component of wider societal moves towards decolonization. As Maldonado-Torres argues, the Fall movements are part of a project of "social, economic and cognitive decolonization" ('Outline of Ten Theses', 4) that questions the role of the university as the "quintessential home of relevant questioning and knowledge production" (25). These efforts to continue the (as of yet) incomplete formal desegregation of higher education in South Africa thus have material consequences.

There are, of course, clear distinctions in the histories of subjugation and resistance across both contexts. Whereas South African anti-colonial movements have for the most part centred on a discourse around individual rights – i.e. the fight to be integrated fully into the nation, on equal terms – Native American struggles have generally been less concerned with this. Rather, Native American anti-colonial struggles often foreground a separatist discourse, centred around the sovereignty of Native nations and their right to have jurisdiction over their people, land and resources. Considering the points of divergence between Native American and South African resistance efforts, Mark Rifkin observes:

> The political struggle [in the United States] lies not so much in gaining full inclusion within the state as in marking the ongoing process of forced incorporation whereby indigenous nations and lands are cast by the state as part of its "domestic" space and, therefore, as under its jurisdiction ('Indigeneity, Apartheid, Palestine', 27).

While Rifkin's distinction is astute in terms of the *anti-apartheid* movement, if we examine the contemporary struggles in post-apartheid South Africa it becomes clear that – though the legal relationship between Native American nations and the United States government is unique – there is indeed common ground with Native American political concerns. Following the end of apartheid in 1994, South Africa no longer constitutes a formal situation of settler colonialism, as can be found in the United States and Canada. Yet, though non-white South Africans have succeeded in gaining "full inclusion within the state", struggles are ongoing with regards to land repatriation and material equality.

In the contexts of South Africa and the United States, then, there are points of common ground in calls for decolonization. The question of land is prominent in both contexts. Across North America and South Africa, historically dispossessed communities are calling for land redistribution; challenging conditions of environmental racism; and campaigning for communities to have jurisdiction over their own territories, particularly when faced with large-scale, multi-national development projects. Calls for land reform in South Africa have been growing in volume in recent years, which led to a promise from President Cyril Ramaphosa in 2018 to commit to a policy of land redistribution. Further, calls for symbolic restitution and material repatriation persist in both contexts. These issues, many of which are highlighted through literary and other forms of cultural production, range from the removal of colonial iconography from public spaces and institutions to material repatriation in the context of biopolitical and cultural histories of extraction and expropriation. This latter issue is raised in the novels by Thomas King and Zakes Mda, which

are the foci of Chapter Two. Yet, despite points of overlap, there are also divergences, and clear distinctions in terms of how they operate practically.

By using the term decolonial, I position myself in conversation with Indigenous, African and Latin American scholars who use it to theorise the possibilities of challenging the legacies of colonialism in different global spaces (Tuck and Yang 2012, Driskill 2010, Mbembe 2016, Mignolo 2007, Maldonado-Torres 2007). This distinction creates a temporal and linguistic separation from historic anti-colonial movements, such as the wave of national liberation movements of the late twentieth century, which do not necessarily resonate with Indigenous contexts in North America. Furthermore, many of the debates on decolonization – particularly in the context of countries that are no longer formally colonised, such as South Africa – aim to foreground ongoing issues that these earlier movements failed to eradicate. These concerns pertain to how systemic conditions that continue to structure inequality intersect with considerations of epistemic decolonization. Discussing the failures of South African decolonial efforts in the context of the Rhodes Must Fall movement, Cameroonian theorist Achille Mbembe argues:

> [Rhodes's] statue – and those of countless others who shared the same conviction ["that to be black is a liability"] – has nothing to do on a public university campus 20 years after freedom. The debate therefore should have never been about whether or not it should be brought down. All along, the debate should have been about why did it take so long to do so (Mbembe, 2015, 3).

Mbembe's words elucidate widespread concerns around the symbolic legacies of colonialism that have not been fully attended to, despite the ANC government's emphasis on a remediation of social and spatial memory during the transition and acknowledgement of the need for "symbolic reparations" (Truth and Reconciliation Commission cited in Graham, 11). The need to demythologise how colonial history is represented or alternately obfuscated is also prominent in discussions of decolonization in the United States. Byrd highlights a process of cognitive dissonance at the heart of the national memory culture, observing that

> while twentieth-century genocides external to the American continent are avowed, those genocides intrinsic to American economic and territorial expansion – slavery and the removal and 'reservation' of American Indians – remain an essential abjection at the heart of American identities ('Living My Native Life Deadly', 318).

Social, political and literary efforts to challenge this abjection are ongoing. For over thirty years, there have been calls to formally mark the national holiday Columbus Day as Indigenous People's Day.[29] Columbus Day celebrations have been criticised as synonymous with the colonising nation's attempts "to further revise history, to justify the bloodshed and destruction, to deny that genocide was committed here and to revive failed policies of assimilation as the answer to progress" (Harjo, 36). The reproduction and disruption of colonial and nationalist mythologies are the focus of my first chapter. Through an examination of novels by Louise Erdrich and Zoë Wicomb, this chapter examines literary efforts to recover those counterhistories that have been disavowed from national memory. As these examples show, and as I demonstrate throughout this thesis, coloniality impacts all areas of life. Without devaluing the significance and urgency of land repatriation movements, then, decolonization efforts that emphasise the return of land should not detract from the need for other types of decolonial engagement.

Relationality as Decolonial Method

In response to these debates, this study posits relationality as a decolonial method for comparative literary analysis. Relationality is a concept that spans many Native American and South African cultures and which crucially positions the self as always in relation to others, human and non-human. In contrast to the self-exceptionalising and dominating narratives of settler colonial mythologies, worldviews rooted in relationality and reciprocity offer radically different ways of understanding individual responsibilities to the land and its creatures, as well as how human societies relate to one another. Such notions fundamentally challenge the separatist, anthropocentric and hierarchical logics that are foundational to the project of coloniality/modernity. The nationalist rhetoric of both South Africa and the United States has historically centred on narratives of exceptionalism – an ideology that this study, through relational work, seeks to disrupt.

In recent decades, critical theory has begun to reconceptualise the radical permeability between human bodies and non-human environments – from Butler's notion of precarity, which asserts shared bodily vulnerability as providing an impetus to rethink our responsibility to other humans, to Haraway's 'nature-cultures', which theorises the entanglement of the natural and the cultural, the ontological and the epistemological. Yet, many of the ideas upon which these theoretical frameworks are based can be traced to non-

[29] The American Indian Movement (AIM) in the mid-twentieth century led opposition to the celebration of Columbus Day and in 1989 successfully campaigned for South Dakota to instead celebrate Native American Day. A growing number of states, including Florida, Hawaii, Alaska, South Dakota, and New Mexico, have now replaced the celebration of Columbus' arrival in the Americas with Indigenous Peoples' Day, observed annually on October 12.

Western belief systems, which are frequently obfuscated from mainstream theoretical discourse. Such processes of obfuscation are a consequence of the systematic devaluation of Indigenous thought that became necessary for the reproduction of Western knowledge systems. Though there are clear distinctions between the expansive range of Native American and South African cultures, many of them share a commonality in that they are rooted in the notion of relationality. In Native American belief systems, relationality emphasises "relatedness, polymorphous kinships, human reciprocities with and of land, and the other than human" (Byrd et al., 5). "Grounded normativity", a concept advanced by Dene scholar Glen Sean Coulthard and Anishinaabe writer Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, theorises an active engagement with relationality as integral to Indigenous survival:

> What we are calling "grounded normativity" refers to the ethical frameworks provided by these Indigenous place-based practices and associated forms of knowledge […] Grounded normativity teaches us how to live our lives in relation to other people and nonhuman life forms in a profoundly nonauthoritarian, nondominating, nonexploitive manner. […] Our relationship to the land itself generates the processes, practices, and knowledges that inform our political systems, and through which *we practice solidarity*. To willfully abandon them would amount to a form of auto-genocide (Coulthard and Simpson, 254, emphasis in original).

Following Coulthard and Simpson, relationality should be understood as always informed by specific local contexts and a corresponding set of responsibilities. Across many African cultures, similar ideas are foundational to animist belief systems. Nurit Bird-David characterises African animist worldviews as fundamentally relational, situating them in opposition to what she understands as the separatist epistemology of modernity:

> If the object of modernist epistemology is a totalizing scheme of separated essences, approached ideally from a separated viewpoint, the object of this animist knowledge is understanding relatedness from a related point of view, within the shifting horizons of the related viewer … Against 'I think therefore I am' stands 'I relate therefore I am' and 'I know as I relate' (cited in Garuba, 47).

This idea is epitomised by the concept of ubuntu, which understands that to be human "is to affirm one's humanity by recognizing the humanity in others" (Ramose cited in

McDonald, 141).[30] While ubuntu is specifically framed in human terms, Mbembe observes that an understanding of human and non-human relationality is intrinsic to many African cultures. In *Critique of Black Reason*, Mbembe asserts that in "Ancient Africa", "[s]haring the world with other beings was the ultimate debt. And it was, above all, the key to the survival of both humans and nonhumans. In this system of exchange, reciprocity, and mutuality, humans and nonhumans were silt for one another" (181). Mbembe's language invokes that of Coulthard and Simpson, who similarly gesture to co-responsibility as a necessary aspect of human and planetary survival. Far from being exclusive to pre-colonial African societies, many African cultures continue to practice animist belief systems.[31] Such worldviews offer radical alternatives to the dominant modes of interacting with non-human environments that are reproduced through capitalist modernity. An approach that foregrounds the relatedness of human and non-human environments is particularly urgent in the contemporary era of anthropogenic climate change.

Literature provides a space for the articulation of relational worldviews, as well as allowing for the negotiation of what relationality can offer to the crises of the contemporary moment. Justice understands literature to provide an essential platform through which a negotiation of relationality takes place, arguing that:

> *relationship* is the driving impetus behind the vast majority of texts by Indigenous writers—relationship to the land, to human community, to self, to the other-than-human world, to the ancestors and our descendants, to our histories and our futures, as well as to colonisers and their literal and ideological heirs—and that these literary works offer us insight and sometimes helpful pathways for maintaining, rebuilding, or even simply establishing, these meaningful connections (*Why Indigenous Literatures Matter,* xix, emphasis in original).

While speaking of Indigenous North American literatures, as I will show, Justice's words have a profound bearing on South African literatures too. The impulse to make connections and imagine solidarities permeates Native American and South African literature. This can be seen in texts ranging from the reflections of Sherman Alexie (Spokane-Coeur d'Alene) on Indigenous and Jewish experiences of genocide in 'Inside Dachau' (2011), to LeAnne Howe's poetry that connects Choctaw experiences of colonial violence with others, including Irish

[30] Ubuntu, an Nguni word that can be roughly translated into 'humanness', was employed as a driving ideology through the South African transition and Truth and Reconciliation Commission.
[31] For a discussion of how animist belief systems resonate in contemporary African life, see Harry Garuba, 'On Animism, Modernity/Colonialism, and the African Order of Knowledge' (2013)

and Arab histories.[32] South African writers, too, have historically sought to engage with others' experiences of oppression and literary expressions of resistance. This frequently occurs through the use of intertextuality which, across Native American and South African literatures, is a device that facilitates productive forms of engagement with other socio-political contexts. In *David's Story*, for example, Wicomb evokes Toni Morrison's *Beloved* (1987), connecting South African women's experiences under apartheid to the subjugation of African American women under slavery. Wicomb's turn to Morrison's novel is notable, as the African American literary tradition is one that has been shaped by women writers, distinguishing it from the male-dominated South African canon. Silko, too, draws on Morrison's text in *Almanac of the Dead*. The assertion, "Sixty million Native Americans died between 1500 and 1600", which appears at the beginning of the novel, invokes Morrison's dedication to the "Sixty Million and more" Africans that died through the transatlantic slave trade (15). As I discuss in Chapter Three, the impulse of this intertextual reference is developed through the Indigenous and African American solidarities that are imagined in the novel, rooted in a recognition of shared experiences of colonial subjugation in the United States.

These impulses are mirrored in recent political movements such as Idle No More, Rhodes Must Fall and the "#NODAPL" protests. While each movement has a clearly distinct aim, taking up different aspects of the decolonial question, they are all notable for their transnational impact. By garnering support from peoples in distinct geopolitical spaces, they exemplify what Nick Estes refers to as a "long tradition of Indigenous internationalism" (203). Coulthard emphasises this tradition when he frames North American Indigenous resistance movements in relation to their critical engagement with a global assemblage of radical, anti-imperial actors, including the African American civil rights movement and African anti-colonial struggles (Coulthard et al., 00:04:50). This influence continues into the present moment: Coulthard notes that his own Dene community sees their struggle as "necessarily connected" to that of colonised peoples elsewhere and his own work is deeply informed by the Black Radical and anti-colonial traditions epitomised by Frantz Fanon (00:04:06). Such processes of exchange and interconnectivity, then, are neither new, nor are they a consequence of globalised capitalism, though technological advances have shaped the ways that these connections frequently materialise. Considering the role of literature in this context, my study posits that the novel offers the potential to not only negotiate the

[32] In Howe's poetry pamphlet, *Singing, Still, Libretto for the 1847 Choctaw Gift to the Irish for Famine Relief* (2017) co-authored with Irish poet Doireann Ní Ghríofa, the publication process facilitates these connections. As a trilingual text, the collection employs English as a bridging language to memorialise historic exchanges between the Irish and the Choctaw.

epistemic, ontological and material legacies of colonialism, but also to produce a form of relationality that provides the necessary means through which to understand and enact solidarity.

Beyond a Trans-Indigenous Framework

Described by Weaver as one of "the most contentiously debated concepts in postcolonial studies", indigeneity becomes increasingly fraught when considered across different global spaces ('Indigenousness and Indigeneity' 221). While I employ theoretical frameworks from Indigenous studies throughout, this study cannot be neatly situated within an Indigenous studies framework. Rather, the variations between how the term Indigenous is differentially understood, claimed and applied across North American and South African contexts requires careful scrutiny. As I argue, a comparative approach to literary engagements with indigeneity can productively expand on what it means to be Indigenous in specific postcolonial spaces. Throughout this thesis I use the word Indigenous to refer to the Native peoples of North America, specifically Native Americans in the United States and First Nations, Inuit and Métis populations in Canada.[33] Following their self-identification as such, I also use this term to refer to the Khoi and San peoples of South Africa, while remaining mindful of the complex issues at stake when this term is used in a South African context. In this section, I discuss some of the challenges posed by using an Indigenous studies approach, particularly around incorporating South Africa into this framework, as well as the potentialities of moving beyond a trans-Indigenous approach.

Indigeneity is a term that is differentially applied transnationally, operating differently in Africa, North America, South America and other global spaces. While there are clear similarities in the experiences of settler colonialism across North America, Australia and New Zealand, where Indigenous populations make up a small minority of the population,[34] in South Africa this looks quite different.[35] Correspondingly, South Africa is rarely incorporated within an Indigenous studies framework. The question of indigeneity here is complicated by the legacies of apartheid's racial classification system, as well as historic migrations that influence understandings of what constitutes a 'pre-colonial' society.

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[33] The more expansive 'Native American' refers to those associated with the term American Indians as well as Alaska Natives.

[34] According to the 2010 census, Indigenous peoples make up just one per cent of the population of the United States.

[35] In South Africa there is a white settler minority that have been, since the colonial era, reliant on the black majority as a labour force. According to the 2011 South African census, whites make up 9.1% of the population, while 76.4% identifies as Black African and 8.9% as Coloured. Note the South African census does not measure the numbers of Indigenous peoples, instead continuing to use the apartheid-era racial categorizations.

By bringing South African literatures into dialogue with an Indigenous studies framework, I seek to move beyond potentially exclusionary definitions of indigeneity that can themselves be rooted within colonial discourse. In doing so, I write in dialogue with Estes, who argues that scholars of Indigenous studies are:

> obligated to interpret histories, cultures and societies beyond what can categorically be defined as just indigenous to their own field of interest or, worse still, limited by colonial state definitions of indigeneity that are confined by imperial borders and racial taxonomies that do not resonate elsewhere in the world. (*Indigenous Studies*).

In bringing together Native American and South African literatures, then, I am not suggesting that South African literature should be read as another Indigenous literature. Rather, I posit that interrogating and even moving beyond classifications such as Indigenous and postcolonial offers the possibility for a better understanding of the forms that coloniality takes – particularly in the context of modern day colonialisms. A global Indigenous literary studies, or trans-Indigenous framework such as that presented by Allen, though ostensibly working to traverse borders, can in fact restrict which cultures and modes of cultural production we can analyse through a common frame. Allen's intervention is valuable for its assertion of the need to undertake Indigenous-centred scholarship by reading Indigenous texts in global comparative terms. But the proposed trans-Indigenous framework is limited, as it doesn't clearly interrogate the concept of indigeneity and, as such, risks excluding groups that do not typically associate with this category. Allen's study focuses on literature and other forms of cultural production of, what he terms, "the *global Indigenous*": a category Allen does not clearly define, but states that it includes (though is "not limited to") "the designations Native North American, Māori New Zealand, Hawaiian, Indigenous Australian and other large-scale groupings" (xvii, emphasis in original). This thesis's comparison of writing by Native American and black or coloured South African authors echoes Allen's demand to decentre settler accounts by moving beyond comparisons rooted in settler-Indigenous binaries, while widening the scope to allow for different engagements with the concept of indigeneity.

There are multiple working definitions of the word Indigenous, all of which are multi-faceted, all of which entail some acknowledgement of primacy, or language around being the first people to inhabit an area. Many understandings establish indigeneity through constructing a settler-Indigenous binary, which is problematic for obvious reasons – i.e. an Indigenous group is defined as Indigenous in terms of their opposition to or lack of assimilation into another (majority) ethnic or socio-cultural group. Some definitions state

that indigeneity is dependent on the non-dominant status of a group – an understanding that, in a South African context, positions the Khoisan as the only Indigenous peoples. Karin Lehmann argues for this application in South Africa, asserting that "an inclusive approach to the concept of aboriginality, that would include also all black African groups, confounds the logic that underlies the recognition of aboriginal rights" (90). This logic, Lehmann argues, is rooted in the protection of the interests of a "particular politically and socially marginalised minority" (90). However, framing indigeneity (or aboriginality) as reliant on a group's position as a non-dominant or minority people lends itself to the suggestion that Indigenous identification itself is fluid or liable to shift along with changes to social demographics. As will become clear, I am sceptical of the potential for a singular definition to be usefully applicable on a global scale – particularly in light of how discursive modes of categorization have historically been used as tools for subjugation. Yet, for the purposes of this study, it is necessary to situate this discussion in the context of global discourse surrounding indigeneity. Within the UN, the International Labour Organization (ILO) understands self-identification to be a necessary component for determining the use of the term Indigenous and further defines Indigenous peoples as follows:

> Tribal people in independent countries whose social, cultural and economic conditions distinguish them from other sections of the national community, and whose status is regulated wholly or partially by their own customs or traditions or by special laws or regulations;
>
> People in independent countries who are regarded as indigenous on account of their descent from the populations which inhabited the country, or geographical region to which the country belongs, at the time of conquest or colonisation or the establishment of present state boundaries and who irrespective of their legal status, retain some or all of their own social, economic, cultural and political institutions (UNESCO).[36]

Under this definition, Native Americans, Alaska Natives, First Nations Canadian, Native Hawaiians and Métis peoples would generally all be understood as Indigenous.[37] The concept

[36] This language was ratified in the ILO Convention 169 passed in 1989 and is also known as The Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention.
[37] Though, in the United States, processes of federal and state recognition complicate how this operates in legal terms.

becomes complicated, however, when we take into account the differential conceptualizations of indigeneity at work in an African context.

While many groups native to Southern Africa were present at the impact of colonization, there is an ongoing debate around whether they can or should be considered Indigenous. As Mark Rifkin notes, this is due to "the complex histories of relation, struggle, and dispossession among communities" ('Indigeneity, Apartheid, Palestine', 35). For example, while the Khoisan are recognised internationally as having First Nations status, this categorization excludes the so-called Bantu majority, whose ancestors migrated from West and Central Africa several thousand years ago.[38] However, at the time of the Dutch arrival in 1652, all of these groups were situated within the geographical area that was to become South Africa. As Richard B. Lee has pointed out, "the black peoples of Africa, whether hunter-gatherers, herders, farmers, or city dwellers, can all claim great antiquity on the continent. Thus, any distinctions between indigenous and nonindigenous must necessarily be invidious ones" (Lee, 84). Focusing on the narrativization of this history, it is clear that the South African colonial powers utilised a discourse of indigeneity to delegitimise the claims of the Bantu-speaking groups. As Johnston and Lawson observe:

> In […] Southern Africa, 'history' records pre-settlement displacements and exterminations. These narratives had the effect of discrediting the 'originality' of the current indigenous population by depicting them as violent *arrivestes* who had dispossessed the 'true' indigenes. In the long run […] they erased the claim of indigenous peoples to 'full' indigeneity and therefore their rights to land ownership and cultural priority (364).

As a strategy of repressive authenticity, this narrativization served to dispossess the Bantu-speaking groups of their land by establishing the Khoisan as the only 'fully' Indigenous South Africans. Such narratives resulted in the successful delegitimization of groups that had migrated from elsewhere in the continent, demonstrating the power that narratives can affect in the context of colonialism. Though this example demonstrates their negative potential, the novels in this study perform solidarity, bringing new narratives into existence.

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[38] The minority Khoikhoi and San peoples are historically grouped under the portmanteau "Khoisan". This umbrella term serves to distinguish the Khoi and San peoples from the so-called Bantu majority of South Africa. The Khoi and San are minority groups with distinct cultural, ethnic and linguistic differences and are recognised by the United Nations as having First Nations status, having resided in Southern Africa for between 150-250,000 years. The Khoisan predated Bantu-speaking groups, who are estimated to have migrated from West and Central Africa 2-3,000 years ago.

Distinctions between the Khoisan and Bantu groups have been made along ethnic lines, as well as through the identification of two distinct language families. However, though depicted to be distinct, these languages are not clearly defined. As Robert Herbert demonstrates: "[w]hile it is true that these groupings – Bantu, Khoikhoi, San – were broadly distinct in terms of language, physiognomy, modes of subsistence and cultural practices, nevertheless their boundaries were negotiable and permeable" (cited in Gilmour, 10). Herbert demonstrates this permeability through an emphasis on linguistics, noting that Khoi and San words have been integrated into Xhosa and Zulu languages, suggesting "a pattern of social interaction and cultural influence that is incompatible with the traditionally described hostile relationship between Southern African groups" (10). Thus, he concludes, "the Khoisan-Bantu relationship should be seen as a symbiotic one, characterised by frequent and intimate interaction over several centuries in several domains, including trade and intermarriage" (10).

The impact of this reassessment is significant, because language became a key tool with which British and Dutch colonial powers sought to categorise (and therefore control) South Africa's existing inhabitants. Such ethno-linguistic classifications formed the basis for the system of categorization that informed the apartheid system of homelands and bantustans. As Rachel Gilmour tells us: "colonial linguistics in Africa" were "not just reflective but constitutive of social reality, contributing to new definitions of language and ethnicity" (11). A history of the Khoisan and Bantu peoples living and adapting in relation to one another for centuries before colonial contact radically reframes the characterization of their social relations as based in conflict, as well as the narrative of the Bantu-speaking peoples as violent invaders, as was propagated by the colonial powers. Indeed, it serves to trouble any clear dividing line between these cultures, which have developed in relation to one another over a longstanding period prior to colonization. It is possible to reframe this history without detracting from the distinct forms of marginalization that the South African Khoisan minority face in the contemporary period. High poverty rates and struggles with the so-called Bantu majority over land rights and language recognition, for example, separate them from other South African groups, while aligning them with many other Indigenous peoples around the globe. In recent years, Khoisan activists have acknowledged and acted upon these commonalities by asserting their indigeneity and demanding the South African government recognise their First Nations status. Khoisan Indigenous movements in South Africa have taken direct inspiration from the global Indigenous rights movement, gesturing towards the potential that cross-cultural Indigenous rights movement can offer for minority groups (E. Schweitzer, 136-9). As I will examine in Chapter Two through an analysis of Zakes Mda's novel *The Heart of Redness*, literature provides a space where colonial mythologies

of indigeneity can be negotiated and their power unsettled. Literature also becomes a site for the creation of new narratives that are rooted in different ways of knowing and being. As I will show, Mda's novel resists a divisive logic by situating South African cultures within a global Indigenous imaginary, evoking the potential for literature to build bridges between and across cultures.

By highlighting the fraught discussions around indigeneity in the South African context, we can posit that a narrative of primacy was co-opted by European colonising powers as a tool for delegitimization with the aim of furthering dispossession. This strategy of de-indigenization employed against the Bantu groups can be understood as a process of "repressive authenticity", as defined by settler colonial studies scholar Patrick Wolfe (402). A frequent strategy of settler-colonial discourse, repressive authenticity renders inauthentic anyone that does not embody the settler-colonial definition of indigenous. As a result, it "eliminates large numbers of empirical natives from official reckonings and, as such, is often concomitant with genocidal practice", as in the case of the United States and Canada (Wolfe, 402). This strategy ultimately enables increased settler access to territory, which is, according to Wolfe, "settler colonialism's specific, irreducible element" (402). With this in mind, understanding "indigeneity as a relative condition", as proposed by E. Cavanagh as a way to organise the multifaceted claims to indigeneity in South Africa, serves to perpetuate colonial narratives of repressive authenticity (10). Rooted in a politics of primacy, a relative understanding of indigeneity can quickly lead to the justification of dispossession and the refusal of rights, through the rendering of certain groups as not Indigenous 'enough'.

Similar strategies of repressive authenticity have been utilised in the United States, perhaps most notably with regards to blood quantum policies, a mechanism that was created as a tool for assimilation but is still used by many tribal nations to determine their membership.[39] As Ryan W. Schmidt notes:

> To obtain federal recognition and protection, American Indians, unlike any other American ethnic group, must constantly prove their identity, which in turn, forces them to adopt whatever Indian histories or identities are needed to convince themselves and others of their Indian identity (1).

[39] A body of law used to "measure" Native American ancestry, blood quantum was created in the late 1800s by the United States government. As a colonial body of law, it relies on a genetic marker of identity and doesn't take into account Native American modes of identification. The continued use of blood quantum policy by many tribal nations, therefore, perpetuates a narrative of racial "purity".

In the US and Canada, this framing of Indigeneity as an ethnic or genetic, rather than cultural, category was privileged over Indigenous notions of belonging.[40] Such processes of defining are examples of what Dena'ina Athabascan/Alutiiq scholar Carol Edelman Warrior understands to be "one of the most effective strategies of colonization": that which "fixes the object of definition and renders it […] controllable, domitable, and, ultimately, consumable" ('Indigenous Collectives', 386). Of course, this strategy of (racial) definition was also a key feature of apartheid. Warrior writes that:

> colonial governments extend federal recognition to Indigenous nations (complete with the requirement to codify how we recognise each other)—and while there are some benefits to federal recognition of sovereignty and tribal membership, the codified structures that define such identities [create] structures that "fix" Indigenous peoples (as groups and individuals), making certain parties vulnerable (380).

As Potawatomi philosopher Kyle Powys Whyte observes, treaties and other binding discursive structures – such as blood quantum – "reduce the adaptive capacity" of Indigenous peoples, by imposing limitations on tribal nations while "ensuring [settler] flexibility" (cited in Warrior, 'Indigenous Collectives', 380). Both Whyte and Warrior, following Coulthard, foreground the problems at stake when recognition operates on the (settler) state's terms.

Clearly, then, the discourse surrounding who is Indigenous in specific global spaces is fraught with questions, including what measures are used to self-identify (or be identified by others); and the complications posed by historic, as well as modern, episodes of migration. There are problems posed, too, by using a single signifier to refer to heterogenous populations, "whose experiences under imperialism have been vastly different" (Smith, 6). Yet, while acknowledging these challenges, we must recognise the significant impact that the mobilization of indigeneity as a collective signifier has had for Indigenous rights on a global scale. As Māori scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith writes, the use of "Indigenous peoples" as a term has "enabled the collective voices of colonised people to be expressed strategically in an international arena" (7). A prime example of this is the implementation of the United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Populations in 1982, which led to the adoption of the 2007 United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP). Despite its failings, UNDRIP marks a vital milestone in its recognition of Indigenous rights

[40] For further reading on this, specifically in relation to genetic and biocolonial definitions of indigeneity, see *Native American DNA: Tribal Belonging and the False Promise of Genetic Science* (TallBear, 2013)

globally.[41] However, as I have argued, it is pertinent to consider what forms of intersectionality and solidarity can be envisaged by looking beyond those rooted in potentially exclusionary definitions of indigeneity.

Thesis Structure

The primary focus of this study is contemporary Native American and South African literary fiction in English, written after 1990. There is a wealth of literature being produced by South African and Native American authors working in other modes – particularly poetry and short fiction – that shares many of the same formal and thematic concerns as the texts in this study. However, I limit my focus to the novel to illuminate the intersections and similarities between the texts. As the literary form most clearly associated with the rise of capitalist modernity, the novel is an import that is "as much a component of modernization as the importation of automobiles" (Jameson, 476). It therefore provides the most pertinent space for the active negotiation of the narratives reproduced through modernity/coloniality. Further, due to the dominance of the anglophone novel in the global publishing industry, we can trace a shared (world) literary heritage across these works. Its resonance manifests most directly, perhaps, in Wicomb and Silko's intertextual invocations of Morrison's *Beloved,* but can more broadly be understood to inform the shared grammar for resistance that I identify across these texts. Limiting this study to the novel, then, allows us to more clearly trace these shared influences and traditions, as well as consider the role that the novel plays in reproducing narratives or, alternately, shaping new ones.

I have limited the temporal scope of the study to post-1990, in order to ensure a similar frame of reference across the texts, particularly with regards to the late twentieth century and early twenty-first century as an era of heightened capitalist globalization. Prior to 1994, the majority of South African texts that were being written engaged, either directly or indirectly, with the anti-apartheid struggle. Therefore, the South African novels that I include here were published post-1994, after which point there was more potential for authors to engage with a wider range of concerns. The novels included in this study expand their remit beyond apartheid and, accordingly, beyond the nation, instead revisiting earlier colonial traumas as well as considering what the future of the country looks like. They are also preoccupied with the impact of capitalist globalization on the post-apartheid state, in line with Ronit Frenkel and Craig Mackenzie's observation that this period of writing can be

[41] For a discussion of some of the failings of the UNDRIP as a document, see Eric Cheyfitz's essay, 'Native American Literature and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples' (2015). Cheyfitz argues here that the Declaration as a document is ultimately contradictory, as it is explicitly anticolonial yet affirms the sovereignty of settler colonial nation states.

characterised by its emphasis which shifts from "nation to transnational relations" (2). As Frenkel and MacKenzie note, this movement is reflective of the global historical moment in which the end of apartheid was located. This included the fall of the Berlin Wall, the apparent end of the Cold War, and "the dissolution of national boundaries – in Europe, in particular, but also globally by virtue of free-flowing international capital and the ubiquity of electronic communication systems" (Frenkel and MacKenzie, 2).

This thesis is organised around three chapters that, through close readings of novels, demonstrate the potential of this kind of comparative work. Each chapter takes a comparative approach, primarily focusing on two novels and drawing upon additional texts where pertinent. My corpus includes works by the South African authors Zoë Wicomb, Zakes Mda and K. Sello Duiker, and the Native American authors Thomas King (Cherokee), Leslie Marmon Silko (Laguna Pueblo) and Louise Erdrich (Ojibwe). These works share a commonality in that their authors write about – and identify with – marginalised groups affected by the legacies of colonialism. Not all of the texts discussed here are decolonial, but they all understand the novel as a space for the active negotiation of, and resistance to, the effects of coloniality. In the North American context, my primary emphasis is on the United States though there is some discussion of Canada owing to their overlapping histories of settler colonialism.[42] All of these texts are written in English, though a number of them integrate Native American or South African languages in creative ways. This practice reflects how the demands of the global literary marketplace intersect with the complex legacies of settler colonial policies of language eradication and enforced literacy.[43] I discuss the way that Indigenous languages are employed as strategic literary devices in Chapter Two, in relation to King's *Truth and Bright Water*.

In my first chapter, I am concerned with literary engagements with memory cultures in Louise Erdrich's *The Plague of Doves* (2008) and Zoe Wicomb's *David's Story* (2001). I argue that these texts employ the archive as a both a formal tool and thematic trope with which to challenge foundational nationalist narratives. Placing Butler into dialogue with Coulthard's work on the politics of recognition, I argue that literary acts of archival interpretation work to render unspeakable histories speakable. In doing so, they reveal and unsettle dominant structures of erasure. I am also concerned with the colonial impositions bound up in the epistemologies of the Western archive and trace literary disruptions of its paradigms, through

[42]The focus on Canada pertains particularly to the novels by King and Erdrich, both of whom are concerned with the Canada-United States borderlands.

[43] In the United States, English is the first language of the majority of Indigenous people, following policies that sought to eradicate traditional cultural and language practices, lasting until the late twentieth century. English was originally one of two dominant colonial languages in South Africa (the other being Afrikaans), but today serves as a lingua franca within a country that has eleven official languages.

a focus on what I term 'alternative archives' – including the oral, the bodily, and the spatial. My second chapter turns to consider how selected Native American and South African authors have used literature to assert a resistance to, not only colonialism and its national legacies, but the global neoliberal order which is its new inscription. Focused on Thomas King's *Truth and Bright Water* (1999) and Zakes Mda's *The Heart of Redness* (2000), my analysis considers how these works negotiate narratives of indigeneity and authenticity in relation to capitalist globalization. I argue that each seeks to reveal and disrupt the processes by which Indigenous cultures are commodified through the interconnected industries of global tourism and the world-literary system. Building on Huggan's concept of strategic exoticism, I examine how these novels challenge the reader to consider the role of the Indigenous/postcolonial author, tracing the transnational and transcultural reverberations of images of indigeneity under globalization. In my final chapter, I approach the question of ontological and epistemic decolonization in the context of anthropogenic (human-caused) climate change. Undertaking a comparison of Leslie Marmon Silko's *Almanac of the Dead* (1991) and K. Sello Duiker's *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* (2001), I identify a shared grammar for decolonization across the texts. I argue that both authors employ relationality as decolonial method, centring non-Western worldviews in their form and content. By emphasising a conceptualization of interrelationality that transcends nation, culture, and even species, these texts demand that decolonization must be understood on a *planetary* rather than anthropocentric scale if it is to legitimately challenge the inequalities created through the global capitalist economy.

Selected themes and concerns recur and reverberate across the novels of this study, particularly pertaining to considerations of collective memory, gender (in)equality, capitalist development and environmental degradation. The unsettling work that I identify across these texts frequently takes shape through a negotiation of these themes. I argue that Native American and South African authors employ a range of shared literary strategies to undertake acts of unsettling. These range from what I define as acts of 'narrative refusal', employed both at level of plot and form, to the subversive use of familiar tropes from colonial exploration narratives, such as the Indigenous cultural guide. The recovery of alternative onto-epistemologies manifests in selected novels both formally and thematically. This strategy is particularly significant to the work of unsettling, as the recovery of worldviews that are rooted in relationality troubles the separatist and hierarchical logic of coloniality. Examining literary engagements with coloniality, my study loosely moves in a chronological direction – from historic settler-colonial narratives, through the contemporary moment of capitalist globalization, to imagined decolonial futures – tracing the potential that literature holds for disruptive transformation in the present. The novels I bring together are situated

within distinct literary traditions of resistance but, by placing them into dialogue, I argue for a relational framework that registers the implicit and explicit connections across the texts. For, while settler colonial nation states can be understood in relation to one another, I argue that resistance movements – and specifically literatures of resistance – can also be understood through a logic of relationality. I conclude by arguing for the potential of the novel as a relational object, which offers the possibility to bring into being new modes of connectivity between worlds. The original comparative readings of novels that I undertake using this method contributes to a decolonization of our intellectual engagement with literature, politics and culture in the contemporary moment.

1

Unspeakable Histories and Alternative Archives:

Louise Erdrich's *The Plague of Doves* and Zoë Wicomb's *David's Story*

Columbus landed in the second grade for me, and my teacher made me swallow the names of the boats one by one until in the bathtub of my summer vacation I opened my mouth and they came back out – Niña, Pinta, Santa María – and bobbed on the surface of the water like toys. I clapped my hand over my mouth once, Indian style, then looked up, for my mother, so she could pull the plug, stop all this, but when I opened my mouth again it was just blood and blood and blood.

\- Stephen Graham Jones, *Bleed into Me* (2005)

In the epigraph to Stephen Graham Jones's 2012 short story collection *Bleed into Me,* the speaker recalls a childhood experience of learning the colonial history of the Americas. In this scene, the colonial state, working through the school system, infiltrates the boundary of the child's body as it simultaneously invades the enclosed space of the domestic, family bathroom. The history of Columbus's landing and, with it, the originary violence of colonial invasion is reproduced through forcibly learnt Spanish ship names. This cross-temporal rendering of colonial violence evokes the transgenerational implications of colonial trauma for Indigenous peoples, as Jones draws a line between assimilationist histories of enforced education and the state's reproduction of colonial mythologies in the present. By imagining the reappearance of the boats – now irrevocably internalised – in this intimate space, Jones's narrator asks us to consider how the colonial state reverberates through language, the body and space in recurrently violent and invasive manifestations. In contrast with the boat names, which emerge all too easily, the child is unable to articulate the violence of the trauma that they have endured. Instead, only blood pours from their mouth. This raises two particular questions: what conditions, including social and political, are required to make trauma speakable? And, if language fails, by what other means can histories of violence be represented?

This quotation foregrounds some of the key parameters of this chapter, which begins with the image of the archive – at once both a physical and metaphorical site that is essential to reproducing the primary fictions of the colonial process. The archive is not exclusively a colonial tool; rather, it is foundational within the machinations of all nation states. We can understand it as occupying a critical role in the establishment and reinscription of the histories, temporalities and epistemologies that are integral to settler colonialism. In this chapter, I deploy cultural imaginaries of the archive to think through its role in reproducing nationalist and colonial forms of authority, as well as to consider the possibility of the archive as a site of disruption. Focusing on *The Plague of Doves* (2008) by Ojibwe author Louise Erdrich and *David's Story* (2001) by Zoë Wicomb, I examine how two prominent Native American and South African writers engage with the archive formally and thematically. These novels posit alternative archives as they interrogate the transgenerational legacies of specific narratives, as well as those that have been either excluded from, or obfuscated within, national archives. Rather than considering specific material archives, then, I am interested here in literary engagements that employ the archive as a tool, symbol and metaphor. Placing Butler's notion of the 'unspeakable' into dialogue with Coulthard's work on the politics of recognition, I argue that literary acts of archival interpretation work to make unspeakable histories speakable and, in doing so, reveal and unsettle dominant structures of erasure.

The archive is a recurring concern in much contemporary literature by Native American and South African authors. This literary interest can be understood in the context of a heightened cultural preoccupation with the machinations of national memory in South Africa, the United States and Canada in recent years. Such cultural preoccupations are rooted in a recognition-based politics, whereby there has been an increase in Indigenous peoples and other marginalised minorities making recognition demands upon the state. As Coulthard, Will Kymlicka, Sheryl Lightfoot and Ronald Neizen have noted, an emphasis on recognition has emerged over the last three decades in the field of Indigenous-state relations in Asia, northern Europe, across the Americas, and the South Pacific. Yet, as Coulthard argues, a politics of recognition largely serves to uphold the status quo without attending to material conditions of oppression. Coulthard suggests that the critique of recognition-based politics is necessary to understand how colonial oppression manifests in the contemporary moment, when "colonial relations of power are no longer reproduced primarily through overtly coercive means, but rather through the asymmetrical exchange of mediated forms of state recognition and accommodation" (4). Ostensibly, Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) processes, such as those held in Canada and South Africa, offer groups that have experienced social death the opportunity to gain social life through a process of

public recognition. As such, they tend to operate with the implicit notion that collective witnessing of suffering will lead to resolution. Yet, instead of an avenue toward freedom and dignity, Coulthard's analysis demonstrates that recognition actually constitutes an arena of power in which colonial relations are (re-)produced. In these terms, transitional justice mechanisms, such as reconciliation commissions or state apologies, insulate colonial acts of violence by relegating them to the past, implicitly supporting ongoing forms of colonialism. While his analysis centres on Canada, Coulthard's critique has a bearing on other settler colonial societies. It is particularly illuminating with regards to the South African TRC and transition more broadly, where a politics of recognition was privileged over reparations. As Rosemary Jolly observes, through the TRC process: "Victim-survivors' stories [became] virtual caricatures within a national economy in which the use-value of apartheid-era survivors' 'credentials' is highly rated, but the political will to deliver upon their actual demands for reparations […] is at an all time low" (Jolly, 30).

Within a politics of recognition, the nation state sets the terms. This process has a bearing on the archive, as the state only facilitates the inclusion of certain histories and experiences. As such, particular experiences are rendered (un)speakable. The question of 'speakability' has been a recurring concern in trauma theory; scholars including Elaine Scarry, Cathy Caruth and Shoshana Felman have argued for the failure of language when it comes to representing different forms of trauma. While such approaches have been productively employed to analyse Wicomb's *David's Story* and the literature of the South African TRC more broadly – for example, Shane Graham's work challenges the 'talking cure' paradigm that is advanced through this model of trauma theory – I am not concerned with this line of analysis in this chapter. Rather, following Butler, I am specifically interested in unspeakability as a condition that is informed by socio-political conditions that either allow or prohibit specific experiences from being articulated in the public sphere. That which is speakable in this context relates not only to the subject's ability to articulate their experience, but crucially is dependent on there being a community of listeners. Within a politics of recognition, this paradigm of 'speakability' is mobilised as the agency lies with the listeners who are able to confer recognition. Writing of the treatment of Arabs in the United States after 9/11, Butler's work on unspeakability demonstrates how racism shapes public discourse, making it impossible to grieve in the public sphere those whose lives are not recognised as livable (*Frames of War,* 1). As scholars including Byrd have observed, this approach enables us to understand the way that the suffering of other marginalised groups is obfuscated in public discourse. Byrd even argues that, in relation to Indigenous peoples in North America, "the Indian is the original enemy combatant that cannot be grieved" (*The Transit of Empire,* xviii). By placing Butler's notion of unspeakability in dialogue with Coulthard's critique of

recognition-based politics, this chapter examines how Native American and South African literary engagements with the archive disrupt a politics of recognition through foregrounding unspeakable histories. Considering Butler's approach in the specific context of the archive demands that we interrogate the relationship between that which is speakable and that which is archivable. Are these things the same? And, if not, how are we to negotiate between them?

Wicomb and Erdrich engage with histories that have been rendered unspeakable, demonstrating the difficulties of representing unknowable events that have been excluded from hegemonic national narratives. Wicomb challenges South African political discourse for its marginalization of the coloured population and, particularly in relation to the TRC, the failure to account for histories of gender violence.[44] Erdrich contests the unspeakability of Native American genocide in the United States (which has neither had a comparable TRC process, nor has it apologised for its colonial past). Each does so through an engagement with the failures of the formal archive and the possibilities offered by alternative archival sites to articulate these histories and reveal structures of erasure. Within the context of a politics of recognition, literary engagements with the archive facilitate an examination of historic and ongoing structures of erasure that enable the continued marginalization of certain groups. In Wicomb's novel this not only pertains to the settler colonial state but, through an interrogation of the South African transition, she demonstrates how *post*-colonial nations can reproduce the same forms of gendered and racialised violence.[45] In staging these debates, literary archival engagements respond to the kind of public discourse that positions the archive as a tool for reconciliation, such as through truth commissions. In doing so, these texts trouble the public perception of the formal archives (such as museums) that frames them as objective, truth-telling institutions that are rooted in fact. This question is particularly significant when we consider the idea that literature – itself an archival form – can be used to 'correct', or otherwise rewrite, dominant historic narratives. Considering the novel in this way raises immediate questions around how far we can understand literature to serve as historical archive. Historians of culture and literature frequently employ the written form in this way. The reading of literature as (often ethnographic) cultural artefact is ascribed with particular frequency to Indigenous and postcolonial literatures, as I discuss in the following chapter through an analysis of novels by Thomas King and Zakes Mda. Wicomb and Erdrich's novels, by destabilising the concept of the archive itself as well as by employing

[44]In using the term coloured I refer to the ethnic category that many people in South Africa use to self-identify. It was formalised during apartheid to describe people of mixed race or those that did not fit into a black-white binary. It is not a derogatory term as it is in Euroamerican contexts.

[45] By using the hyphenated 'post-colonial', I am referring to the time period after the 'event' of colonialism, specifically with regards to countries that are no longer formally colonised (but that are nevertheless still impacted by ongoing colonial legacies).

literary devices such as unreliable narrators, each refute the positioning of literature as a reliable archival form. Instead, through heteroglossic, non-linear narratives, each novel opposes the notion of a singular, linear conception of history. In doing so they demonstrate the possibilities that the novel offers for disrupting this very paradigm.

Since the mid-twentieth century, feminist, queer and postcolonial thinkers have sought to recover those histories that have been repressed within dominant narratives. Nancy Peterson identifies a movement of women of colour writing "consciously historical" literature that responds to Adrienne Rich's challenge to strive "for memory and connectedness against amnesia and nostalgia" (Rich, 145). Peterson argues that such works call "attention to what has been previously undocumented or forgotten as one vital means of resisting amnesia" (6). Following Peterson, I locate Erdrich and Wicomb's novels within this broader context. However, I argue that these works do not suggest it is possible to recover those histories that have been forgotten. Rather, they demonstrate the ways that structures of erasure have prevented them from being made publicly legible and, through positing alternative archival modes, challenge the racialised, gendered and epistemological biases of the Western archive. Taking this imperative to look *beyond* the formal archive as a point of departure, I argue that Wicomb and Erdrich recover alternative archives which have previously been excluded. Troubling the Western conceptualization of the archive, my analysis emphasises the oral, the bodily, and the spatial as sites of knowledge and remembrance.

Among recent Native American fiction, few novels engage more with the politics of remembrance than Louise Erdrich's Pulitzer Prize-nominated *The Plague of Doves* (2008). Susan Strehle argues that Native scholarship and creative work more broadly can be understood as a "sustained critique of [the] disavowals of Native identities and histories" that occur through the discourse of American exceptionalism (109). Erdrich's novel specifically achieves this through a formal and thematic engagement with the archive. Further, Erdrich is not only concerned with the "Native identities and histories" that have been disavowed, but also the Native ontologies and epistemologies that have been denied through the process of settler colonialism. Described by David Stirrup as an "especially rich [and] dense" text in need of serious critical engagement, *The Plague of Doves* charts the historic and contemporary experiences of entwined Ojibwe and Euroamerican communities living on an unnamed, fictional reservation and its surrounding towns in North Dakota (195).[46] Covering a period of over 100 years, Erdrich accounts for the first settlers to establish the fictional town of Pluto, up until to the novel's present in the 1970s. At the centre of the

[46] The term Euroamerican is used to refer to individuals of European descent living in the United States.

novel, Erdrich recasts the traumatic history of a real-life twentieth-century lynching and builds a fictional account of the legacies that pervade over a century later, highlighting the on-going effects of colonialism in North America. At the turn of the century, a group of Native Americans, including a thirteen-year-old boy, were blamed for the murder of a settler family and lynched by a white mob. In Erdrich's retelling, they are wrongfully blamed for this crime and, generations later, descendants of the perpetrators and victims are marked by the event. Evelina Harp is the novel's primary narrator and the granddaughter of Seraph Milk (referred to throughout as Mooshum). The sole survivor of the lynching, Mooshum is spared after betraying his friends – an act that leads to their deaths.

In recalling this violent history, Erdrich challenges the national amnesia surrounding Indigenous genocide. Erdrich's novel has a complex, non-linear heteroglossic narrative structure that incorporates a range of different narrative forms, with epistolary elements including diaries and newsletters. The oral tradition – primarily carried by the brothers Mooshum and Shamengwa – also occupies a central position. While the novel is set entirely in North Dakota, it is aware of the transnational context within which it is situated. Several narratives centre around the descendants of the Milk family, who fled to the United States from Canada following the failed 1869 Métis rebellion led by Louis Riel.[47] As with all of the Native American novels in this study, Erdrich's is a text that is consciously engaged with interconnected transnational processes of settler colonialism. Specifically, Erdrich is interested in the space of the Canada-United States border, which she emphasises as both a tangible relic of colonial violence as well as a porous and fragile boundary.

David's Story (2001) centres on South Africa's transitional period and the country's attempts to shape a post-apartheid national narrative. Written two years after the close of the South African TRC, the novel obliquely engages with the activities of the Commission, despite not referring to it by name, and takes aim at those histories that were excluded from its resulting narrative. The non-linear form spans a broad timeframe, from the mid-nineteenth century to 1991, at the time of Nelson Mandela's release from Robben Island. It follows the protagonist David Dirkse: a coloured cell leader in the uMkhonto we Sizwe (MK), who approaches an unnamed woman to write his life story.[48] Yet, as the narrator states in the preface, "[t]his is and is not David's story", as the narrative becomes overshadowed by the stories of the women that surround him (1). The novel problematises South Africa's

[47]The Métis are a group of Indigenous Canadian communities that have both First Nations and European settler (particularly French) heritage. They are a distinct group with specific cultural and language traditions, representing roughly 35% of the Indigenous population in Canada (Government Of Canada, *Aboriginal Identity Population, Canada, 2016*)

[48] The MK, or uMkhonto we Sizwe, was founded by Nelson Mandela in 1961 as the armed wing of the African National Congress (ANC). The Zulu name means 'Spear of the Nation'.

national narrative by underscoring certain excluded experiences and identities – particularly the place of those who were categorised as coloured under the apartheid racial classification laws. Occupying a liminal position in South Africa, the coloured community make up just 8.9% of the country's population (though Cape Coloureds are the predominant population group in the Western Cape).[49] In *David's Story* and in her critical work, Wicomb confronts the "failure, in coloured terms, of the grand narrative of liberation", following the black and white antagonisms that dominate South African discourse ('The Case of the Coloured in South Africa', 94).

Wicomb's novel is particularly interested in those who identify as Griqua, a group that holds First Nations status and yet is one of those "ethnic identities felt to have been politically eclipsed in both the old and the new systems" (Driver, 216).[50] Reimagining their seldom-recalled history of dispossession and nationalism in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the historic narrative of *David's Story* focuses on the Griqua chief Andries Abraham Stockenstrom le Fleur. Wicomb also calls attention to the role of women in the old and new regimes, raising questions surrounding gendered forms of oppression in South Africa. Of particular significance is the spectral figure of Dulcie Olifant, David's MK comrade and unconsummated beloved. Through fragmented narratives, Dulcie is suggested to have been tortured and possibly killed. Her implied treatment raises the issue of the sanctioned maltreatment of African National Congress (ANC) comrades and the role of women in the anti-apartheid movement more broadly. Wicomb's interest in the relation of female bodies to the archive is informed by the history of Saartjie Baartman: the Khoikhoi woman who was exhibited in Europe as the "Hottentot Venus" in the early nineteenth century for her large steatopygia. Wicomb was writing when the South African government petitioned for the repatriation of Baartman's remains, which were kept at the Musée de l'Homme in Paris until 2002. Though *David's Story* pre-dates this return, the novel is "attentive to the growing national and Griqua demand for her repatriation and burial" (Samuelson, *Remembering Nation,* 88). Baartman, whose history figures peripherally throughout *David's Story,* haunts both David and the narrative more broadly, as Wicomb employs her image to negotiate the appropriation of women's bodies and images in the service of nationalist myth making.

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[49] Data obtained from the 2011 census. It is important to note the cultural and ethnic heterogeneity of the coloured community, as anyone that did not fit into the black and white binary was collected into this singular grouping under apartheid. This category included the Khoikhoi, San, those of mixed ethnicity, as well as those with heritage from countries as diverse as India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Madagascar, and Mozambique.

[50] The Griqua do not align with the Bantu majority, asserting First Nations status and claim their original language to be the Xiri language of the Khoi. The Griqua, like the Khoi and San, were classified 'Coloured' under apartheid.

There is a common theme in South African literature in which women's bodies are frequently used as vehicles for the telling of patriarchal histories. Following Samuelson, we can observe that women's bodies are often appropriated to fit with nationalist symbols, such as mother or 'womb', whilst their voices are ultimately silenced.[51] Wicomb underscores this strategy as a broader tradition through the juxtaposition of two nationalist movements in South African history: the fictionalised account of the historical Griqua nationalistic cause, led by Andrew Le Fleur; and the anti-apartheid movement, of which the novel's protagonist David is a senior member. In drawing clear parallels between the hierarchies of both resistance movements, Wicomb's examination of the treatment of women from the colonial to post-apartheid era epitomises Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's claim, that "for the subaltern, and especially the subaltern woman, 'Empire' and 'Nation' are interchangeable terms" (*Outside in the Teaching Machine*, 78). Through the figures of Dulcie, Rachel Susanna and Baartman, Wicomb registers the coloured female body as a repository for historical and intergenerational trauma, while challenging the reader to consider what it means to understand the gendered and racialised body as an archive.

In this chapter, I first trace how the archive operates as a colonial mechanism, specifically focusing on its role as an epistemological and mnemonic device. This follows my discussion in the introduction to this thesis of the epistemological legacies of coloniality. Tracing the colonial logic of the Western archive, I point towards alternative archival sites that can reveal additional pieces of information about the past. Following this, I review dominant examples of public memory discourse in the specific contexts of the United States, Canada and South Africa. This is necessary in order to situate my analysis of Wicomb and Erdrich's novels, which are consciously engaged with contemporary conversations around the politics of remembrance. I then turn to textual analysis, arguing that we can read the novels together through an examination of the ways that they disrupt the stability of the archive. The first section of this chapter is largely concerned with national memory cultures. It considers what is unspeakable within the contexts of the United States and South Africa, which histories have been suppressed, and how these novels approach the question of retrieval. The second section considers alternative archives, specifically documenting the transnational material reverberations of the racial paradigm that coloniality advanced. In my discussion of Erdrich and Wicomb's novels, I examine how literature maps these traces across space and the body. In my analysis, I first attend to the oral archive, which figures in both novels as an uncertain source of knowledge – at once both integral to cultural continuity yet inherently fallible. Registering the fallibility of the oral archive immediately raises the

[51] This motif recurs in the novels by Mda and Duiker discussed in the following chapters.

question of how far other archival forms are (un)reliable. This is a concern that both authors foreground and to which I attend in my analysis. The third section focuses on archival acts of interpretation; as a shared strategy this enables both authors to negotiate the limits of the archive. Finally, I then turn to examine how colonial processes of racialization have been imposed upon, and irrevocably shaped, South African and Native American bodies, attending to how this reverberates through the body across generations. I emphasise that understanding the body as an archive is inseparable from a consideration of the land and the way that a colonial understanding of race has informed the socio-spatial development of the United States and South Africa.

The novel provides a space in which those voices that have historically been excluded from the archive can be re-imagined into existence. Through imaginative archival acts, Wicomb and Erdrich reveal and contest the structures of erasure that have rendered these histories unspeakable. Investigating alternative archival sites in dialogue with one another is necessary, I argue, to establish a holistic understanding of the enduring effects of coloniality. As we can see from the Jones quotation at the start of this chapter – the oral, bodily and spatial archives are porous, always informing each other in a multitude of ways. This interrelationality manifests with particular clarity through processes of racialization, where forms of categorization rooted in physiology have irrevocably shaped the socio-spatial landscapes of the United States and South Africa. My analysis of the bodily and spatial archives in these novels, then, attends to the material traces of racialization – a process that is foundational to coloniality. Yet, beyond this, these novels demonstrate that the body and the land are connected in other ways. As I will show in my analysis of *The Plague of Doves*, Erdrich suggests a relationship between Indigenous peoples and the land that is ontological, rooted in a notion of relationality rather than a capitalist mode of valuation. Such provocations prompt us to consider how to conceptualise the body's relation to the land beyond a logic of coloniality.

The Archive as a Colonial Technology

The archive is a site through which the nation state establishes itself as an imagined entity, with the narratives and epistemological underpinnings necessary to ensuring its own futurity. In this section, I think through the archive as a colonial mechanism in mnemonic and epistemic terms. Control of the archive is essential to the operationality of the settler colonial state, enabling the hegemony of settler narratives and ideologies. This takes shape through the formation of a national cultural memory, "a field of activity in which past events are selected, reconstructed, maintained, modified, and endowed with political meaning" (Said, 185). This process, of course, is necessary to the formation of any nation state – not only

those that are settler colonial. The construction of any national cultural memory entails the disavowal or displacement of bodies, histories, or forms of knowledge that contradict or undermine its existence. The settler colonial archive can be understood through what Eve Tuck and C. Ree define as the triad of settler colonial relations, which includes:

> a) the Indigenous inhabitant, present only because of her erasure; b) the chattel slave, whose body is property and murderable; and c) the inventive settler, whose memory becomes history, and whose ideology becomes reason. Settler colonialism is the management of those who have been made killable, once and future ghosts (642).[52]

The archive is a key technology with which the state is able to manage those who have been made killable. Yet, for the settler colonial archive, those disavowed bodies haunt the very narrative that was constructed to justify their exclusion. In this context, we can understand the relationship between the state and the archive as paradoxical. For, the state is at once both reliant on the archive it has constructed yet threatened by that which has been excluded and rendered unspeakable.

The archive further informs and shapes processes of knowledge production within society. As much as European imperialism entailed the dispossession of pre-existing populations and expropriation of resources, it also involved the inscription of knowledge systems that reaffirmed European thought and disavowed the worldviews of colonised societies. The establishment of national cultural archives played a fundamental role in enabling such forms of epistemic and ontological violence. As South African playwright Jane Taylor argues: rather than merely "a repository of public records", the archive can be understood as "an idea, a conception of what is valuable and how such value should be transmitted across time" (244). Not merely a tool to shape specific narratives, in which histories are remembered or alternately suppressed, the cultural archive informs what *types* of knowledge are considered valuable. Focusing on the dominance of the written record, Mbembe posits that the archive is "fundamentally a matter of discrimination and of selection, which, in the end, results in the granting of a privileged status to certain written documents, and the refusal of that same status to others, thereby judged 'unarchivable'" (20). There exists a multiplicity of archival sources that play a foundational role in the construction of cultural identities, yet which are excluded from the Western conceptualization of the archive. As has

[52] While Tuck and Ree are writing from a North American context, their observations about settler colonial relations more broadly are pertinent. Chattel slavery played a large role in the development of South Africa, of course, until it was abolished in 1838. The slave population in South Africa consisted of African peoples, as well as Asian peoples imported by the Dutch VOC (East Indian Company) from Indonesia, Malaysia, and New Guinea.

been well documented, Native American and South African archival practices are not historically situated in a Euroamerican tradition of print culture. Rather, knowledge traditionally resides in other spaces: in families, passed down over generations through oral traditions, in bodies, and their relations with landscapes.

Just as Indigenous modes of recording history have been excluded from the archive, so too have Indigenous agents. Native Americans and black and coloured South Africans have historically been excluded from the process of contributing to formal archives. Instead, their inclusion was largely facilitated through an extractive logic, which positioned Indigenous peoples as vanishing cultures worthy of preservation, or physiological curiosities to be studied, stored, and displayed.[53] This process framed Native Americans and the Khoisan, for example, as passive objects, refusing them the agency to determine how their own cultures were portrayed or how their cultural and even biological materials were used. It would be inaccurate, then, to suggest that Indigenous and African peoples were erased from the archives of the United States and South Africa. Rather, the colonial archive exercises a practice of documentation and subsumption which is equally violent. The presence of Indigenous peoples was *disremembered*, to employ literary scholar Meg Samuelson's term. Samuelson argues that the reconstruction of post-apartheid South Africa as a "rainbow nation" was dependent on images of women, whose bodies and historical presence are disremembered, writing: "In search of tractable symbols with which to express their ideals of homogenous unity, national and ethnic claims commandeer women's bodies and deny the more messy aspects of their legacies that cannot be neatly enfolded within the nationalist script" (*Remembering the Nation,* 2). While Samuelson's focus is on gender, her emphasis on how certain bodies are "disremembered" in the service of creating national mythologies offers a productive way to think through the archival presence of Indigenous North Americans and selected South African figures, including the Khoisan and Griqua. The process of disremembering is routinely employed as a tool in the formation of settler colonial national narratives, though the machinations of disremembering are themselves obfuscated. Present but disremembered into ideal forms, the presence of the colonised in the archive is appropriated to portray the types of image that necessarily further the colonial project.

In recent years, questions of archival access, ownership, and public memory have been growing across South Africa, the United States and Canada. These debates raise the question of whether the archive can be deployed as a tool for reparations in the wake of colonial violence. In the late 1990s, following the end of apartheid, South Africans were

[53] The colonial preoccupation with physiological difference is epitomised in the history of Saartjie Baartman, who was displayed in Europe as a living exhibit in the early nineteenth century. Following her death, her body parts remained on display in Paris until the 1970s.

"confronted directly […] with questions of who owns information, representation and memory" (Taylor, 243). Since 1994, South Africa has been actively concerned with shaping a new national memory that speaks to the new South Africa. The new ANC government advanced a nation-building agenda in which the 1996-8 TRC played a crucial role. Yet, there have been substantial critiques of the machinations of the TRC, regarding the way that certain histories or experiences were privileged for public recognition. Following the work of Antjie Krog, Kopano Ratele and Nosisi Lynette Mpolweni-Zantsi in *There Was this Goat* (2009), we can observe how the South African TRC *reproduced* a logic of coloniality by setting certain expectations of how suffering should be articulated, expectations that manifested along gendered, cultural, economic and linguistic lines. Consequently, the TRC failed to incorporate those testimonies that did not adhere to a normative framing.[54] Focused on the testimony of a Xhosa woman, Mrs. Konile, Krog et. al.'s analysis traces the points of divergence within Mrs. Konile's testimony that informed the way her contribution was rendered "incomprehensible" (100). In the United States, the question of Indigenous peoples' rights in relation to state archives has been a key political issue for the past four decades, exemplified in the passing of the 1990 Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA).[55] Connectedly, in Canada the 2008-15 TRC was established to document the history and legacies of the genocidal Indian Residential Schools (IRS) system.[56] Explicitly considering the role of museums and archives in the project of "national reconciliation", the TRC report found these institutions to "have interpreted the past in ways that have excluded or marginalized Aboriginal peoples' cultural perspectives and historical experience" (The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 303). While the report provided a set of recommendations relating specifically to museum and archival practices, widespread criticisms around issues of access and ownership with regards to this process highlight the barriers that remain in place for Indigenous peoples (Todd and Fraser).

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[54] Mrs. Konile testified about the murder of her son, who was one of the 'Gugulethu Seven': a group of men in the armed wing of the ANC, who were killed by South African security forces on 3 March 1986. Unlike the other grieving mothers, Konile spoke in her testimony of her dreams, her destitution in the rural Eastern Cape and her unwillingness to forgive the perpetrators. The confusion that resulted from her narrative was compounded by what was perceived as her Otherness in terms of language and cultural background.

[55] NAGPRA requires United States' federal agencies and institutions that benefit from federal funding to return Native American "cultural items" to tribes and descendants. Cultural items designates funerary and sacred objects, objects of cultural patrimony, and even human remains, that are frequently held in state archives and withheld from the communities from which they originate.

[56] The IRS system, implemented both in Canada and the United States, was part of a cultural genocide agenda, seeking to eliminate Indigenous cultures and languages and assimilate Indigenous children, forcibly removing them from their homes and communities. The schools, established from the late nineteenth century until the late twentieth century, were plagued with abuse and unsanitary conditions. The last schools closed in 1973 (United States) and 1996 (Canada).

With the issue of the archive – and subaltern efforts to reclaim it – occupying such a prominent place in North American and South African public discourse, it is not surprising that these debates should find their way into contemporary literary texts. These often deeply material questions inform social, cultural and political discourse in the public sphere. Central to both Wicomb and Erdrich's novels is the idea that traditional narrative forms and modes of recording history are inadequate when faced with representing unspeakable histories. Both novels are concerned with the relation between the past and the present, connections which are foregrounded through their non-linear structures. Each employ multiple narrative forms, including letters, notebooks, newspaper clippings, in addition to first-person narratives. Further, by exploring the figure of the archivist, each novel employs the image of the archive as a thematic and formal concern. Each features instances of writing, recording, collecting and interpretation, considering the figures that shape the record. These archival acts figure at both the level of diegesis as well as form, as through writing the novels Wicomb and Erdrich uncover and reimagine specific marginalised histories.

The lynching at the heart of *The Plague of Doves* is based on an historic event that has been largely forgotten. As Erdrich notes in the book's acknowledgements, in "1897, at the age of thirteen, Paul Holy Track was hanged by a mob in Emmons County, North Dakota" (Erdrich, 313). Erdrich commented in an interview that, having discovered the history in an old newspaper, the story "haunted" her for some time before she wrote the novel (Goodman). *David's Story* is similarly concerned with histories of violence that have been excluded from dominant narratives: that of the Griqua, explored through the historic figure of Le Fleur; and the histories of violence against women, explored through the figures of Dulcie and Saartjie Baartman. While Dulcie is ostensibly a fictional character, in her Afterword to the 2001 Feminist Press edition of *David's Story*, Dorothy Driver alerts readers to her possible "prototype": the ANC activist Dulcie September, whose 1988 assassination in Paris still remains unresolved (Driver, 252). Though September remains the highest-ranking ANC-official to be killed outside of Southern Africa, her legacy has been largely forgotten in the post-apartheid narrative. This erasure can partly be understood through the context of a larger silencing of women's roles in the anti-apartheid struggle – a history that Wicomb is concerned with highlighting, through the depiction of women agents in the anti-apartheid movement. Both novels are creative acts of archival interpretation that deploy the image of the archive (and the trope of the archivist) to reimagine that which has been excluded and, in doing so, reveal the processes of exclusion that undergird the modern nation state.

The Oral Archive

As most Native American and South African societies are traditionally oral cultures, the oral archive is a vital form of cultural memory. Oral storytelling, as Harold Scheub notes in relation to South African cultures, "weaves people into the very fabric of their societies" (cited in Blaeser, 54). In addition to providing a sense of collective identity and shared history, passed down over generations, oral storytelling practices vitally inform social and political systems. Discussing the wide-ranging significance of the Anishinaabeg storytelling tradition, particularly in terms of its instructive function, Leanne Betasamosake Simpson writes that these stories:

> teach both individuals and collectives how to promote, nurture, and maintain good relationships, how to function within a community, how to relate to the land, how to make collective decisions […] On a deeper, conceptual, level, they teach about Nishnaabeg political culture, governance and diplomacy, decision making and leadership. They carry within them our political traditions and our most deeply held collective values (*The Gift is in the Making*, 16).

Yet, the vital functions of Native stories are frequently disregarded in Western discourse, which undermine the oral tradition as a legitimate knowledge system. As LeAnne Howe observes, "no matter what physical evidence lndians have, our stories are thought to be myth" (Howe, 37). This disavowal stems, in part, from the way that the Western written form was privileged by European settlers as one of the few valid forms of recording history. Indigenous forms of writing and recording knowledge were excluded from the normative definition, instead rendered "exotic" or "ahistorical" (Schweitzer, 3). In this way, Ivy Schweitzer argues that "writing, and the archives that preserved it" became "the pre-eminent tool of conquest" (3).

The oral archive occupies a liminal position in Wicomb and Erdrich's novels, both offering access to hidden or unofficial forms of cultural memory, while simultaneously raising questions of reliability. In both cases, they register the oral tradition as a vital mode of transferring forms of knowledge across generations, undermining the dominance of the written text within Western archival practices. In these texts, the oral tradition offers the possibility to literally make speakable that which has been rendered unspeakable. Oral storytelling provides a crucial way that counterhistories can be transferred when they have been excluded from dominant hegemonic narratives (e.g. those reproduced through state education). The continuing presence of this tradition also serves to provide a connection to pre-colonial African and Native American cultures. At different scales, its enduring significance in the contemporary timelines of both *The Plague of Doves* and *David's Story*

demonstrates the continuity of pre-colonial cultural traditions, and is thus indicative of cultural resilience. The oral tradition is a vital component of Indigenous survivance, which Anishinaabe writer and scholar Gerald Vizenor understands as "an active sense of presence, the continuance of native stories, not a mere reaction, or a survivable name" (Vizenor, *Manifest Manners*, vii). The Anishinaabe poet and writer Kimberley M. Blaeser, citing Harold Scheub's work on storytelling and the anti-apartheid movement, observes "the importance" of the oral tradition "to the survival of South African communities" (54). Musing on the underexplored parallels between Native American and South African cultures in this regard, Blaeser contemplates: "[p]erhaps the construction of a tenured identity through storytelling creates a sense of selfhood and community loyalty powerful enough to fuel survival" (54). Yet, as Erdrich and Wicomb emphasise, the oral tradition is not exempt from the biases that permeate other modes of recording history.

Blaeser's reflections on community formation are realised in Erdrich's depiction of an Ojibwe community in North Dakota, whose collective identity is constructed and maintained, in large part, through the oral tradition. Erdrich highlights oral storytelling practice as integral to paradigms of Indigenous memory, epitomised through the character Mooshum: the Métis grandfather of Evelina Harp, whose narratives are interspersed with untranslated Ojibwe and Michif. By adopting traditional Indigenous narrative modes and even languages to portray Native histories, Erdrich formally realises the politically subversive potential of non-Western archival forms. Mooshum's stories establish the oral tradition as a repository for counterhistories that have been otherwise erased from hegemonic settler narratives. For, the histories that Mooshum imparts cannot be read or learnt about in official records. As Evelina observes: "it seemed that Mooshum had knowledge of something […] that no-one else would tell me" (Erdrich, 56). This is not only due to Mooshum's role as a mischievous influence, who relishes in telling his grandchildren stories their parents would prefer he did not, but also because he serves as an essential connection for the younger generation to their past and thus their collective identity. Through the oral tradition, Mooshum is able to articulate certain histories that have been historically marginalised. As such, his oral narratives sit in marked contrast to the settler archives represented in the novel, including the exploration diaries of Joseph Coutts and the historical newsletter produced by Neve Harp and Cordelia Lochren.

Attesting to the essential role of the oral tradition in the construction of Indigenous identities, Louis Owens, the late novelist and scholar of Choctaw, Cherokee, and Irish-American descent, writes: "For the traditional storyteller, each story originates with and serves to define the people as a whole, the community" (9). In *The Plague of Doves*, more than any origin or other traditional story, it is the memory of racialised violence towards Native

Americans that comes to define the community. Evelina and her brother learn of this history from their grandfather Mooshum, whose oral testimony is interspersed throughout Evelina's narrative. Though reluctant to recall it, he eventually tells the story of the lynching at the turn of the twentieth century, when a group of Natives were lynched after being wrongfully suspected of killing a Euroamerican family. Mooshum, the sole survivor, was hung with the rest but cut down at the last second. Though the lynching entwines the lives of the victims' and perpetrators' descendants, the event has been excluded from Pluto's collective memory. Having tried to repress this violent history, the town "avoid[s] all mention" of it (Erdrich, 297). The town's disavowal of this history is symptomatic of a broader refusal within the public sphere to register historic and continuing forms of Indigenous suffering. Exemplifying Butler's assertion that "specific lives cannot be apprehended as injured or lost if they are not first apprehended as living", the refusal to grieve the lynched men and boy is a refusal to register the lives of Indigenous people as livable, reflective of the social death of Indigenous peoples in the United States (*Frames of War,* 1). By contrast, the Ojibwe community remembers the history. In the contemporary timeline, this remembrance is marked physically on the landscape. Upon visiting the site, Evelina notes that the tree is filled with "new prayer flags… red, green, blue, white" (253). The emphasis that the prayer flags are "new" foregrounds the continuation of traditional practices of remembrance enacted by the Ojibwe community, decades after the event occurred.

This site of settler amnesia is juxtaposed with the World War One memorial in Pluto as an official site of remembrance. In recalling these spaces alongside one another, Erdrich questions which bodies can be remembered in national consciousness and, in doing so, foregrounds the disavowal of Native histories in America. Native American lynchings specifically are doubly 'unregistered' within the United States as, within the national memory culture, only African American lynchings are (to some degree) acknowledged. While there are historically more occurrences of African Americans being targeted by lynch mobs, lynchings, along with massacres, became "part of a continuum of white settler collective violence" against Native Americans in the westward expansion of the nineteenth century (Pfeifer, 26). However, these accounts are seldom recalled in mainstream discourse. The way that the lynching of Native Americans has been largely excluded from national consciousness exemplifies what Byrd understands as the competitive memory culture of the United States: that which depends "upon the collision of the competing historical genocides of African Americans, Jews, Palestinians, and Indians to gloss, obscure, and cancel each other out through moral equivalencies" ('Living My Native Life Deadly', 313). This process works to strengthen the settler narrative, Byrd argues, as "these competing discourses of the true genocidal moment pit all survivors against each other while reifying the oppressors'

innocence and control" (313). Erdrich's heteroglossic narrative, which incorporates the histories and perspectives of Natives and settlers alike, begins to unsettle this competitive framing of memory culture, attending to the ways that both communities have been irrevocably altered as a result of colonialism. In *Almanac of the Dead,* which I discuss in Chapter Three, Silko further disrupts this paradigm through incorporating the colonial histories of Native American, African American, and African communities to create a multidirectional memory archive.

By juxtaposing the two sites of remembrance, we raise the question of how notions of speakability and grievability intersect with that which is (un)archivable. What is speakable, Butler suggests, is related to the issue of whose lives are counted as livable, or deaths as grievable. If a form of violence is un*speakable* within societal discourse, it follows that it is also un*archivable*. In contrast to the memorial for (predominantly settler) war causalities, the extrajudicial killing of Indigenous peoples is excluded from Pluto's narrative. The ungrievability of Indigenous death is materially registered here in the comparative invisibility of the history. Juxtaposing the two sites of remembrance – formal and informal – Erdrich suggests that unspeakable forms of violence are therefore unarchivable in a national public sphere. As I will show when discussing interpretive archival approaches, Evelina works to disrupt this paradigm by marking the history on the landscape. However, while such counterhistories may be unarchivable in a formal sense, this does not mean that they do not leave identifiable traces. Rather, unspeakable histories of Indigenous suffering are accessible through alternative archives – repositories that are both individual (such as the body) and collective (such as the oral tradition). Understanding the oral tradition as an archive for counterhistories becomes something of a paradox, as that which is unspeakable is here contained within a (subaltern) archive that is literally spoken.

Erdrich's subversive use of the oral tradition is further demonstrated through Mooshum's role as a trickster. Recurring across many Native American cultures' origin stories, the trickster is "a figure simultaneously old and new, a peripatetic figure who in his wanderings has made the transition from traditional oral tales to contemporary written literature" (Blaeser, *Gerald Vizenor*, 136).[57] Theorising the illusory nature of trickster storytelling, Vizenor suggests that "trickster stories are openly deceptive, but […] everyone is aware of the pleasures of illusion, transformation and deception" (cited in Pulitano, 148). Mooshum's fantastical retellings of his own experiences, such as the story of how he lost his

[57] In many Native American cultures, the trickster takes the figure of an animal (including Coyote, Raven and Spider). In Ojibwe cultures, Naanabohzo is a spirit that is a trickster who features in Ojibwe creation stories. This archetype recurs across Native American literary works, including Thomas King's *Truth and Bright Water,* which I discuss in Chapter Two.

ear (of which multiple different versions exist), embody the playful humour of trickster narratives. However, there is also a subversive element to this mode of storytelling. In this light Mooshum's unreliable tales are acts of refusal, preventing Indigenous narratives from being neatly integrated into the settler colonial archive. Such acts are epitomised in the stories that Mooshum tells Neve Harp, who regularly visits Mooshum to gather "material for her newsletter", and Father 'Hop Along' Cassidy (Erdrich, 83). As an historian and Catholic priest respectively, Neve Harp and Father Cassidy each represent different forms of settler colonial authority. Mooshum's refusal to establish a single version of history as truth is, then, a refusal to adhere to settler colonial archival practices, which rest on the need to define, subsume and, ultimately, control Indigenous peoples. This is, in part, a disavowal of Euroamerican archival practices, which rest on deriving singular and linear narratives of historical truth, leaving no room for the kinds of multifaceted and layered understandings of history that are integral to Indigenous storytelling practices. Mooshum's convoluted and, at times, conflicting tales – as well as his tendency when directly questioned to respond with "ridicule" – ensure that aspects of Indigenous experiences remain unassimilable into the settler archive (Erdrich, 84). The malleability of the oral archive – that aspect which has conventionally been used to discredit Indigenous histories – is here being employed for subversive means. Following Vizenor, "everyone is aware" of the deception at work in Mooshum's narratives, which makes the stance of refusal apparent.

Mooshum's elaborate performances exemplify Mohawk scholar Audra Simpson's theorization of Indigenous existence as a politics of refusal. In *Mohawk Interruptus,* Simpson argues that a politics of refusal is:

> a political and ethical stance that stands in stark contrast to the desire to have one's distinctiveness as a culture, as a people, recognised. Refusal comes with the requirement of having one's political sovereignty acknowledged and upheld, and raises the question of legitimacy for those who are usually in the position of recognizing: What is their authority to do so? Where does it come from? Who are they to do so? (A. Simpson, 11).

A politics of refusal is a rejection of a politics of recognition. It declines to recognise settler authority and, in doing so, denies the subsuming of Indigenous cultures, histories, and lives into the machinations of the settler state. Acts of what I term 'narrative refusal', such as those enacted by Mooshum, have a bearing on socio-political processes that are rooted in a politics of recognition. The TRC in Canada relied on Indigenous peoples' sharing of testimony in order for Canada to reassess its colonial history. Yet, as Coulthard observes, as long as the

terms of this process are set by the settler colonial state, the resulting recognition will only serve to maintain the status quo. Mooshum's slippery trickster narratives subvert this process. His refusal to provide concrete accounts symbolise a refusal to integrate Indigenous histories into the national narrative on settlers' terms.

Mooshum is a resistant figure through his politics of refusal. Yet, there is a tension between Mooshum and Erdrich's own narrative approach. Mooshum's position at the level of narrative diegesis is in contrast with the form of the novel, as well as Erdrich's own narrative process. Rather than enacting a similar form of narrative refusal, Erdrich instead uses the novel to correct the American historical narrative, rewriting it to more fully account for the complexity of selected Indigenous experiences. The novel requires the reader to piece together the chronology of events, as it is structured in such a way that the full history of the lynching is only discernible when all of the separate parts – narratives of settlers and Natives alike – are brought together. There is a tension, then, between Mooshum and Erdrich's own narrative approach that is significant. By using the novel form to rewrite Indigenous history into the United States' national narrative, Erdrich problematises the logic that drives Mooshum's acts of refusal. By weaving together the perspectives of settlers and Natives alike, at the level of *form* Erdrich's novel augments a politics of recognition.

Erdrich further complicates Mooshum's narrative approach, as the Métis elder not only refuses to provide truthful accounts to the settler figures but the stories he passes on to his grandchildren are full of fabrications. Notably, in Mooshum's account of the lynching he fails to mention that it was his fault that the group were blamed. It is Sister Mary Anita, a descendant of one of the men in the lynching party, who reveals that Mooshum betrayed the group by placing the group at the scene. Mary Anita tells Evelina: "I believe your grandfather used to drink in those days. Your Mooshum told Eugene Wildstrand that he and the others were at the farmhouse. Mooshum told how they had found that poor family" (Erdrich, 250). Though "[n]owhere in Mooshum's telling of the events did he make himself responsible", Evelina knows "instantly that it was true […] Here was the reason he was cut down before he died" (251). This revelation fundamentally challenges Evelina's (and our) understanding of the history of the lynching. In his retelling, Mooshum played the role of a heroic patriarch and was, along with the others, blameless. His failure to account for his own role in the lynching demonstrates, to Evelina and to the reader, the significance of subjectivity that plagues the reliability of the oral archive. Though Erdrich suggests that other archival forms do not escape this concern, it is notable that she does not hold the oral up to be infallible. Rather, like any other archive it runs the risk of being doctored and, as is suggested here, this frequently occurs in the service of patriarchal nationalism.

In *David's Story,* the oral archive occupies a similarly liminal place in terms of cultural memory. Wicomb's engagement with the Griqua highlights the extent to which their presence has been systemically erased from South Africa's socio-political landscape. Even in 1922, there were "no traces […] of the Old Ones, the Grigriqua ancestors who once roamed these plains and whose spirit the Chief said they would capture here as a new nation" (97). While this process had been ongoing since the colonial period, it intensified under apartheid. The novel is, in part, the story of David's struggle to locate his cultural and ethnic roots in a country that has eradicated all traces of it from the surface. Visiting Kokstad in 1991, the town established by the earlier Griqua chief Adam Kok III in 1863, David attempts to research his roots and possible connection to Le Fleur. Yet, no signs remain. The formal archives bear no trace of Le Fleur: neither the library nor the local newspaper office can assist him with his search: "How fascinating, they say, as he speaks of Le Fleur, the maverick chief. No, they have not heard of the man" (76). His search for a contemporary Griqua presence in their former principal settlement in Griqualand East is largely fruitless; only "an ancient toothless woman" recalls the Chief and his slogan, "East Griqualand for the Griquas and the Natives" (138).

The physical absence of the Griqua is a product of colonial processes that sought to erase Indigenous presence from the South African landscape. The absence that David encounters in Kokstad can be situated within a broader attempt by the South African government to reinscribe the spatial arrangements of the country first under colonialism, then later under apartheid. Specifically in relation to the presence of coloured communities, John Western observes how coloured names were erased from the street directories for Cape Town from 1936 and 1940, so that the directory only included the names of white families (Western, 17). As I will show in the following section on acts of archival interpretation, Wicomb and Erdrich's archival approaches are characterised by the way they look for gaps and silences in hegemonic narratives. In line with this, they suggest that we must also do the same with the landscape: to search not only for material traces of violence – which manifest, for example, in the enduring presence of colonial borders and the uneven distribution of land – but, equally, to look for that which is missing. The failure by the town of Pluto to mark the site of the lynching in *The Plague of Doves* resonates with the erasure of Griqua history in Kokstad. Both sites have seen the attempted erasure of an Indigenous physical presence, carried out in order to obfuscate histories of settler colonial violence. This has ultimately contributed to the vanishing race trope that has been attributed to Indigenous peoples since the colonial period. Yet, while Erdrich highlights a thriving Ojibwe community that counters the "Vanishing American" stereotype, David is unable to locate a surviving Griqua population. As David is informed by the hotel clerk in Kokstad, "Griquas are from

the olden times; there aren't any left now. We're all coloured here" (111). As this quotation suggests, in South Africa colonial processes of erasure were exacerbated through apartheid's racial classifications system. By grouping a diverse range of people together under the umbrella term 'coloured', the apartheid government made phenotypical understandings of what constituted 'race' the primary mode of identification at the expense of distinct cultures.

For David, then, his Griqua heritage is only traceable through "all the old stories that Ouma Ragel told, about Chief Le Fleur, and […] Great-ouma Antjie trekking down from Namaqualand", as well as the mementos displayed in her parlour (27).[58] Wicomb thus emphasises the importance of oral storytelling to collective memory, as it is the only accessible repository of Griqua history available to David. Ouma Ragel's accounts tell of the Beeswater settlement and of a childhood spent in the presence of the Griqua Chief. Yet, frequently rambling and filled with inaccuracies, David comes to realise that "Ouma Ragel's stories may not have been as reliable as he thinks" (103). This tension is articulated by the narrator, who observes that:

> truth, far from being ready-made, takes time to be born, slowly takes shape in the very act of repetition, of telling again and again about the miracles performed by the Chief, seasoned and smoked in Ouma's cooking shelter to last forever – stories that made much more sense than the remaining fragments of the old man's own text (103).

Like Ouma Ragel's cooking, the memory of the Griqua is constructed through slow and careful work that gradually establishes one version of history as the truth. Wicomb's evocation of this repetitive work – Ouma Ragel's "telling again and again" – points to the way in which oral histories are necessarily cemented within cultures. Without the written form as a recording mechanism, oral cultures are required to repeat forms of knowledge in order to avoid them being forgotten (Ong, 41). Yet, Wicomb also gestures to the unreliability of the oral tradition for this same reason; the malleability of individual memory makes it fallible as an archival form.

Ouma Ragel's narratives gesture towards the difficulty of retrieving histories that have not been incorporated into formal archives, thereby rendering them at risk of being irrevocably lost. However, the novel also suggests that material archival forms, including those conventionally privileged in the formal archive, are equally malleable. To David, Ouma Ragel's account of the Griqua "makes more sense" than Le Fleur's script. While ostensibly

[58] Ouma is the Afrikaans word for grandmother.

the documents David analyses contain Le Fleur's words, in the historic narrative they are shown to have been shaped by the careful interventions of his wife, Rachel Susanna, as well as the failings of an inexperienced scribe, who invents speech to cover for his failure to accurately take down the Chief's words. The unreliability of material archival forms is further emphasised through the portrait of John Glassford and his family circa 1767, which David encounters during a visit to the People's Palace in Glasgow. Upon observing the portrait, David sees a ghostly figure looking out at him before learning that the image of a black slave in the original portrait had been painted over. David informs the amanuensis that he

> did not expect to find the effacement of slavery to be betrayed in representation, as an actual absence, the painting out of a man who had once […] signified wealth and status and who, with the growth of the humanitarian movement, had become unfashionable as an adornment on canvas (193).

As Graham notes, the painting is an example of "palimpsestic imagery" employed by Wicomb "as a trope for the ways in which historical injustice is conveniently erased from social memory yet continually reveals itself by making visible the gaps and erasures inherent in the selection and emphasis of the narrative elements" (S. Graham, ""This text deletes itself"", 138). The palimpsestic traces of this process emphasise how material archival forms are prone to being manipulated in the service of reproducing a desired narrative. The Glassford painting is an example of the colonial archive being altered, an attempt to obfuscate Glasgow's historical involvement in the slave trade following an increasing emphasis on human rights and, with it, the rising demand for Western nations to present a humanitarian image. However, Wicomb's implicit critique of the TRC through Dulcie's story stresses that the post-colonial archive is similarly prone to such processes of manipulation.

Acts of Archival Interpretation

Through an engagement with the frailty of different archival forms, Wicomb and Erdrich highlight the difficulty that surrounds questions of accessing and representing counterhistories: those histories that have been excluded or marginalised within hegemonic narratives. Yet both novels evoke the generative potential of archival acts of interpretation, which they posit to overcome the limitations of the archives. Acts of archival interpretation are carried out at the level of narrative diegesis, as they are undertaken by various characters. They are also an integral part of the writing process itself, as both Wicomb and Erdrich root their narratives within historic events. As I demonstrate, they do not suggest that such acts allow for the recovery of historical 'truth'. Rather, by thematically invoking the interpretive

work involved in the writing process, both authors foreground the processes by which these histories have been marginalised in the first place. This is, in part, about which narratives of violence are speakable within the public sphere. But it is also a question of epistemology, of which conceptualizations of history are privileged.

In Wicomb's novel*,* for both David and his amanuensis, understanding David's cultural heritage becomes a curative act of piecing together various fragments of memory and physical artefact. David speculates as to why his Great-ouma Antjie was present as the only woman in a photograph of the founding fathers of Beeswater. Looking for hints of a connection between Antjie and the Chief, he notes the significance of her place next to Le Fleur whose face is "not quite turned away" from hers (99). Searching for hidden clues within photographs and family heirlooms is the only way for David to connect with his cultural heritage. His dislocation exemplifies the experience of cultural disconnection that is a consequence of colonialism. It is impossible for David to access Griqua culture through conventional means – spatial or community-based forms of knowledge, for instance – because colonialism has largely severed these forms of connection. Yet, while the archive offers a way of connecting to one's culture, Wicomb suggests that this process will always be obstructed due to the legacies of colonialism. This is emphasised through David's own recollection of his Great-ouma Antjie: the image of an "ancient" woman "squatting in a half-moon cooking hut of reed, mud, and tightly stretched sacking" (100). This ostensible memory of her is enmeshed with that of "a figure in the diorama of the Natural History Museum, where a wrinkled Khoi woman squats by a fire".[59] David's own memories are irrevocably inflected by the colonial gaze – specifically, colonial archival representations of the Khoisan – which have merged with his own recollections. David's understanding of his cultural ancestry, then, is entirely built in relation to what this assortment of fragments allows him to imagine. It becomes a creative act of interpretation, as David "nevertheless imagines" the details of Antjie's life "as a young girl", before she travels to join the Namaqualand settlement with her husband (101). One distinction between the two novels, then, is how far the collective reproduction of memory can provide a meaningful connection to a wider cultural identity. While David's Griqua heritage (and therefore Griqua identity) seems to be eternally out of reach, Evelina retains the possibility of connection to her Ojibwe culture (despite the fallibility of the oral tradition). One of the reasons for the continuance of this connection is the land which, as we will see, occupies a crucial position in the formation of Indigenous identity in the novel.

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[59] The inclusion of the Khoi in the Natural History Museum is not unexpected, but its significance is worth reiterating. The word 'natural', of course, equates Indigenous peoples with nature; and implicit in 'history' is the suggestion that the Khoisan are only able to exist in the pre-modern.

Within *David's Story,* this process of archival interpretation operates at multiple levels. David's own interpretations at the level of narrative diegesis echo that which Wicomb and the narrator are undertaking at the level of form. While parts of the narrative are written from David's perspective, the narrative makes it deliberately unclear whether his ruminations are in fact inventions created by his amanuensis. Through re-imagining the experiences of female historical figures, the unnamed narrator enacts a feminist archival practice of interpretation with which Wicomb herself engages. Wicomb thus dramatises her own imaginative writing process as the amanuensis tells the story of David's life by delving into the lives of the women that surround him. Though the narrator suggests that she is "as David outlined… simply recording", this is evidently not the case (3). Instead, she acknowledges altering the narrative after David's death, having taken "liberties with the text and revised considerably some sections that [David] had already approved" (3). Her position enables her to reinsert the agency of coloured South African women into the historical record, particularly through the extended narratives of Sally, Dulcie, Ouma Sarie and the historical account of Rachel Susanna. Through the inclusion of these fabricated accounts, the narrator subverts the longstanding efforts of David and Le Fleur to exclude female experiences by telling the history of coloured South Africans largely through the voice of women. The resulting narrative is far from that which David had in mind: "You have turned it into a story of women: it's full of old women, for God's sake, David accuses. Who would want to read a story like that? It's not a proper history at all" (199). David's approach to the writing process further reveals his internalization of colonial epistemologies. Like Le Fleur, his understanding of what constitutes "proper history" is informed by colonial narratives that emphasise patriarchy and erase "old women" entirely. Wicomb's depiction of coloured women as archival agents, through the surreptitious interventions of the amanuensis and Rachel Susanna, sits in marked contrast to how they have historically figured as archival objects to be studied or collected, exemplified in the experiences of Baartman and the Khoi diorama figure that David encounters in the Museum of Natural History.

The narrator's and Wicomb's own attempts to flesh out the gaps and silences in the historic narrative embody the kind of feminist archival practice advanced by Saidiya Hartman. In 'Venus in Two Acts' (2008), Hartman employs what she refers to as "critical fabulation" to make sense of gendered silences in the trans-Atlantic slavery archive (11). Hartman describes the tensions within this process of creative interpretation:

> The intention here isn't anything as miraculous as recovering the lives of the enslaved or redeeming the dead, but rather laboring to paint as full a picture of the lives of the captives as possible. This double gesture can be described as straining

> against the limits of the archive to write a cultural history of the captive, and, at the same time, enacting the impossibility of representing the lives of the captives precisely through the process of narration (11).

Wicomb's rewriting of the historical narrative of coloured South Africans through a focus on women's experiences can be understood through Hartman's attention to the "double gesture" of critical fabulation. Through the narratives of Ouma Sarie and Sally in the contemporary timeline and Rachel Susanna and Antjie in the historic narrative, Wicomb fills in the silences in the historical record, imagining the interior lives of the women whose perspectives have been largely omitted. Wicomb draws attention to the roles played by women in the anti-apartheid movement, whilst highlighting the extent to which their contributions were undermined in post-apartheid discourse. Yet, even as she reimagines these narratives, Wicomb simultaneously gestures towards the ultimate impossibility of this task, all too aware of the failures of narrative representation.

The failure of representation is epitomised in the figure of Dulcie, who Wicomb describes in an interview as "the necessary silence in the text; she can't be fleshed out precisely because of her shameful treatment which those committed to the movement would rather not talk about" (Meyer and Olver, 190-191). Dulcie's experiences simultaneously haunt the narrative while resisting narrativization; she is, as David frames it, "a kind of […] scream somehow echoing through my story" (134). The narrator seeks to represent the violence that she imagines has been committed against Dulcie, writing entire sections on her, despite David's instructions to "remove all references to a special relationship between him and Dulcie" (137). The amanuensis positions Dulcie's body as a repository for varied forms of violence but, by her own admission, has "invented" elements of these accounts, in an attempt to "flesh [Dulcie] out with detail" (134). Yet, as she informs the reader, it is "a story that cannot be told, that cannot be translated into words, into language we use for everyday matters" (151). As critics such as Graham have observed, Wicomb's engagement with Dulcie facilitates a negotiation of the failures of the South African TRC. These pertain specifically to experiences of gender violence, as well as atrocities committed by the anti-apartheid movement that were side-lined during the transition.

Established between 1996-8, the TRC offered "the promise of listening" (Jolly, 17). Yet, as Jolly observes, "who, how *and* why it recognised victims as such dictated what it was able to hear". The TRC publicly investigated and recorded human rights violations committed during apartheid, giving victims the opportunity to contribute to the official record and perpetrators the chance to apply for amnesty. In doing so, it aimed to build a unifying collective memory for the country where being "authentically South African" came

to "mean sharing the traumas of apartheid and uniting in the subsequent process of 'healing the nation'" (Wilson, 14). In constructing a new national narrative, the country attempted to create a sense of historical discontinuity to create a clear separation between the old and new South Africa. Amnesty, which Peter Burke defines as the "official erasure of memories of conflict in the interests of social cohesion", was a central element of the TRC process (cited in Olick et al., 191). Yet, while certain types of experience were held up by the TRC as eligible for 'official' amnesty others, it has been argued, were not sufficiently integrated. Though the TRC was an independent process, the ruling party did not encourage heightened scrutiny into their operations, with the consequence that atrocities committed by the ANC were slow to emerge. The failure to incorporate certain histories into the post-apartheid narrative, then, facilitated state-endorsed recognition of certain issues while essentially condoning a national amnesia over others. Jolly's analysis of the TRC draws on Roberta Culbertson who, writing on the censorship that is imposed on survivors of violence, observes that the "demands of [this type of] narrative […] operate in fact as cultural *silencers* to this sort of memory, descending immediately upon an experience to shape notions of legitimate memory, and silencing the sort of proto-memory described (Culbertson, 170, emphasis added). One area in which the TRC failed in this regard was in relation to experiences of gender violence. Tristan Anne Borer's analysis of the TRC demonstrates its failure to fully account for gendered experiences under apartheid, specifically instances of sexual violence committed by the apartheid state, as well as members of the ANC (2009).

Following this, we can understand Dulcie's experiences as unspeakable/ungrievable for two reasons. Firstly, because of the unknowability of her experiences, there lingers an unanswered question of what happened to her and others like her (including Dulcie September). Dulcie's character is literally ungrievable because her ending is ambiguous, both unknown and unknowable. Secondly, they are rendered ungrievable in public discourse, through a political refusal to engage with gendered experiences of apartheid, as well as the anti-apartheid movement's own abuses. Critics including Samuelson, Graham and Driver have analysed the character of Dulcie through the context of representational failure.[60] In Samuelson's analysis of the novel, she interprets Dulcie as an "unstable presence" that refuses to be pinned "down as interpretable subject" (Samuelson, *Remembering the Nation,* 109). The conditions that render the violence Dulcie faces unspeakable are reflected in her literal inability to speak. This is thematised in the scenes in which Dulcie is being tortured yet "will not ask for an explanation, will not protest, since they can only offer lies" (179). It also operates within the form of the novel, as there is no narrative from Dulcie's perspective.

[60] For further reading, see Samuelson (2007), Graham (2009) and Driver's Afterword to the 2001 Feminist Press edition of *David's Story.*

The reader is only able to access Dulcie through fragments recalled by David or imagined by the narrator. Through these strategies, Wicomb represents Dulcie's relegation to the domain of the unspeakable, even as she cannot represent the experiences to which she has been subjected. Samuelson suggests that Wicomb's instrumentalization of representative failure in the case of Dulcie "productively present[s] violence against women as (un)spoken […] If Dulcie spoke the word 'rape' she would run the risk of compromising the cause for which she has fought and the revolutionary subjectivity she has crafted for herself as a militant woman" (*Remembering the Nation,* 152). Samuelson here places agency with Dulcie, suggesting that she could speak but chooses not to for fear of endangering the anti-apartheid movement. While I am largely in agreement with Samuelson regarding Dulcie's agency, I want to highlight that her experiences are also unspeakable because the conditions for them to be *heard* do not exist. Within the context of the anti-apartheid movement and, it is implied, within the South African transition, there is no willing audience to witness the violence to which Dulcie has (presumably) been exposed. Subsequently, they are unspeakable because they are unutterable in the wider public sphere.

Situated in contrast to Dulcie, however, is the figure of Saartjie Baartman. By incorporating Baartman's history, *David's Story* suggests that there are specific conditions that allow violence against women to be made speakable (in Butler's terms) and, consequently, grievable. Dulcie is juxtaposed throughout the narrative with the spectral figure of Baartman. When asked to provide the amanuensis with information about Dulcie, David is unable to do so, instead choosing "to displace her by working on the historical figure of Saartjie Baartman instead" (134). Deferred, David can only access Dulcie's story through oblique inferences, through writing on female figures from South Africa's colonial history. Gillian Gane observes that these invocations, which include Eva/Krotoä, the Khoi woman who acted as an interpreter for the Dutch, are "layerings of displacement among which it is virtually impossible to find a 'real,' 'true' Dulcie" (106). Samuelson suggests that David's obsession with Baartman can be understood in the context of how her image has been appropriated in "ethnic nationalist discourses that adopt her as ancestor in order to marshal an ethnic purity against the 'shameful' origins of colouredness" (*Remembering the Nation,* 105). I would add to Samuelson's analysis that, in addition to offering the opportunity to reframe his own feelings of racial inadequacy, David is eager to incorporate Baartman *in place* of Dulcie, as the narrative that has been written for Baartman fits the national script. David creates space in his narrative for Baartman as an example of a coloured female body that has been integrated into national memory.

Writing on how the female body has been appropriated in the service of national myth-making, Samuelson suggests that, in the narrative of post-apartheid South Africa, "the

story of [Baartman's] body is called on to express is of a nation recovering from a traumatic past" (*Remembering the Nation,* 5). Baartman's story encompasses histories of colonial trauma and gender violence, but – following Mandela's successful efforts to have her remains repatriated – it has been employed as a narrative of resilience in the service of national healing. As such, it contributes to an idealised narrative in which South Africa transcends a history of suffering by reclaiming sovereignty over its own history and peoples. Yet, Dulcie's story in all of its unknowability risks undermining the anti-apartheid narrative, by uncovering some of the atrocities committed by comrades during the struggle. Dulcie's story, as one that is too disruptive to the anti-apartheid narrative, cannot be articulated by David, whose discipline and loyalty to the movement was "legendary among his comrades" (12). There is a tension, then, between the way that forms of violence against women are made speakable or alternately hidden from view according to the wider socio-political context. This example demonstrates how histories of gender violence are actively appropriated in the service of strengthening a national narrative. Wicomb's writing evokes a paradox whereby the only avenue through which unspeakable histories of gender violence can be articulated is through the representation of representational failure. This is an act of narrative refusal at the level of form. Through using the narrator to imagine fragmented episodes of abuse, Wicomb both witnesses those histories of gender violence that have been obfuscated by the ANC, as well as evoking the impossibility of ever recovering their precise details. As I have noted, Dulcie is largely a creation of the amanuensis, who reasons that since "there is little to go by other than disconnected images, snippets of Dulcie, I must put things together as best I can, invent" (80). Dulcie's body becomes an archive for unknowable histories of gendered trauma yet is simultaneously unable to carry the weight of this violence, symbolising the failure of representation.

Though it takes a distinctly different approach, *The Plague of Doves* can similarly be read through a lens of archival interpretation. Erdrich's novel reimagines an historic episode of collective violence that has been suppressed from the historic narrative. In an interview, Erdrich emphasises the difficulty posed by writing this history: "It really happened. I didn't know how I was going to get to it, and so I wrote *around it* for many years and put together differing stories" (Goodman, emphasis added). Erdrich's recollection of writing "around" the event shapes the form of the novel in many ways. The story is revealed to the reader indirectly; each narrative brings us closer to the full picture, circling in until the identity of the real killer is revealed in the final narrative. This indirect mode of approaching the historic event speaks to Erdrich's archival approach. The work Erdrich undertakes to imagine the legacies of the event, as well as the lives of the Indigenous boy and men that were lost, renders Indigenous suffering speakable through a narrative mode that requires an act of

synthesis on the part of the reader. Erdrich's own attempts to reinscribe this history onto the historical record are mirrored at the level of narrative through the actions of Evelina, who remaps the history of the lynching onto the North Dakota landscape. Catherine Nash uses the term remapping to conceptualise postcolonial attempts to claim the power of representation and to recover a relationship to place that has been disrupted by colonialism (Nash, 1993). This is particularly appropriate in the context of this novel, as Evelina marks the deaths of the Indigenous men as grievable when she hangs Holy Tracks's boots on the lynching tree.

Erdrich's text advocates for women to have direct responsibility for the recording of history – an idea that Wicomb is also deeply concerned with. This shift responds to the gendered history of archival practices, whereby women (and particularly women of colour) have frequently been excluded from shaping cultural archives. Reflecting this, female characters in *The Plague of Doves* are required to correct doctored, or otherwise unreliable, narratives. As Gina Valentino has argued in her analysis of the novel, Evelina's mother Clementine draws on matrilineal family history to challenge her daughter's acceptance of a racially-based nationalist model of Indigenous identification, which is transferred from Mooshum (129). Using other strategies, Evelina and Cordelia Lochren both undermine patriarchal accounts of history by recording the memory of the lynching onto the historical record. Cordelia, the president of the local historical society and the sole survivor of the farmhouse murders, attempts to rewrite the narrative through an engagement with the Western archive. The memories that she records as historical newsletters are, "bound in volumes donated to the local collections at the University of North Dakota" (308). As with the amanuensis in *David's Story,* Cordelia is in a position of power: both characters ostensibly have the final word in terms of what is written on the historical record. However, through an engagement with alternative modes and processes of collective memory, such as the oral tradition and imagined geographies, Erdrich demonstrates that the traditional Western archive cannot fully convey the past. Evelina's act of reinscribing the counterhistory of the lynching onto the landscape can be read as an alternative mode of recording history. In this way, Erdrich suggests that Indigenous mnemonic forms, such as the spatial, cannot be fully represented in the Western archive.

In the final chapters of Evelina's narrative, she visits the former reservation land where the lynching occurred. Evelina salvages the boots that belonged to Holy Track, the thirteen-year-old victim, and with Mooshum throws them into the oak tree where the group were hung: "Mooshum knotted the laces, handed the boots to me. I threw them up. It took three times to catch them on a branch […] I hated the gentle swaying of those boots" (253-4). Evelina's description of the swaying boots in this passage closely resembles Mooshum's

earlier depiction of the lynching itself: "When I came to, I looked up and there was these damn boots…. walking, the boy was still walking, on air. They let him dangle there, choking to death, and watched him" (252). Rather than a simple act of remembrance, the act of hanging Holy Track's boots in the tree is a subversive act that renders the trauma and violence of the history visible on the landscape. In carrying out this act, Evelina remaps the landscape with a spatial representation of the traumatic history, directly confronting the collective repression of the event. In performing this act, Evelina simultaneously confronts the histories of Indigenous dispossession and genocide, by reclaiming the former reservation land to inscribe a Native counterhistory upon it. This act of remapping takes on particular significance if we consider the way that Indigenous peoples have been prevented from having, not only control over the land, but "control over how their information, histories, and cultural knowledge are used and interpreted" as a consequence of colonialism (Ghaddar, 22).

Further, we can understand Evelina's act as an act of epistemological resistance, by foregrounding the significance of space as an archive. If the Western archive has a bearing on reproducing specific epistemologies, one of the clearest examples of this at work is how it reinscribes a temporal understanding of history. By establishing a teleological notion of time, European imperialism has been framed as a project of progress. This narrative is facilitated by the archive, which establishes a clear, linear narrative of history. Yet, the constructed temporality of the archive is a fabrication. As Mbembe observes:

> Through archived documents, we are presented with pieces of time to be assembled, fragments of life to be placed in order, one after the other, in an attempt to formulate a story that acquires its coherence through the ability to craft links between the beginning and the end. A montage of fragments thus creates an illusion of totality and continuity. In this way, just like the architectural process, the time woven together by the archive is the product of a composition ('The Power of the Archive and its Limits', 21).

The time of the archive is an inherently political construction. It narrativises the past in order to secure national futurity through the inscription of a hegemonic national imaginary. Further, as Lakota scholar Vine Deloria Jr. observes, the Western emphasis on *temporal* conceptions of history delegitimises other modes of viewing the world. Deloria argues that, "the very essence of Western European identity involves the assumption that time proceeds in a linear fashion" – a logic that contrasts with Native American cultures, which frequently have non-linear understandings of time (Deloria, 62). Deloria suggests that Indigenous

cultures tend to see the world from a spatial, rather than temporal, point of view. This means that Indigenous history is told "in terms of what happened *here* instead of what happened *then*" (Preston, 86). Keith Basso's work on Western Apache naming practices demonstrates the significance of the land in Indigenous memory cultures, helping us to conceptualise some of the distinctions in *how* different cultures remember. Basso observes that place-names describe a geological place or an event that occurred there; the focus on "where" rather than "who, what, why", Basso notes, exemplifies Deloria's spatial conception of history (Basso, 34). Language here acts as a form of historical – even geological – record. In the case of place-names that no longer reflect their geographies, they articulate what has changed within the landscape. As such, they prompt us to consider what forms of knowledge can be found by looking beyond the formal archive – an approach that Erdrich highlights through an emphasis on space. Erdrich's novel registers a spatial conception of history. The collated narratives create a palimpsestic account of a specific landscape on the Minnesota and North Dakota border. It is palimpsestic because, though the settler narrative of the land has been physically and epistemologically scored onto the landscape, pre-existing Indigenous understandings of the land are still discernible. Erdrich's emphasis on remapping allows her to negotiate the spatial legacies of colonialism, while recovering different ways of relating to the land. Remapping, as understood by Nash, crucially involves recovering different ways of relating to place (Nash, 1993). In contrast to the property-driven settler narrative of land is the (largely forgotten) counterhistory of Indigenous dispossession and Indigenous belief systems, which pose an alternative way of being with the land.

Material Traces of Racialization

The discussion so far has been concerned with the power relations at work in distinct national memory cultures, shaped by the socio-political legacies of colonialism. This final portion of the chapter turns to the material legacies of colonialism on space and the body. The Cree poet and scholar Billy-Ray Belcourt writes, "the body is an assemblage…of everyone who's ever moved us, for better or for worse" (59). If we are to consider the body as an assemblage in these terms, what does it mean to frame this in a trans-historic, trans-generational context? This requires understanding the body as something that is not only shaped by the realities of a singular lifespan but is marked by historic experiences of violence, or even expressions of resistance. In this section, I map material traces of colonial processes of racialization across the body and landscape, which I argue are co-constitutive archives. Here, I wish to bear in mind the points of divergence between the (un)speakable and the (un)archivable to suggest that the body can attest to, or become a repository for, histories that are otherwise unutterable.

In Julietta Singh's *No Archive will Restore You,* she considers what it means to register the body as an historical archive. Contemplating the words of the Italian political theorist Antonio Gramsci, Singh undertakes an inventory of her own "body archive":

> The starting-point of critical elaboration is the consciousness of what one really is, and is "knowing thyself" as a product of the historical processes to date, which has deposited in you an infinity of traces, without leaving an inventory… Therefore it is imperative at the outset to compile such an inventory (Gramsci cited in Singh, 17-18).

The possibility of mapping the marks left by history upon her body, "an assembly of history's traces deposited in me", offers Singh the potential for restoration (29). Yet, it is a difficult process that requires reckoning with the ways in which the body has "changed dramatically through forces both natural and social", as well as reality of her body as one that "has been broken and maimed many times over" (29). As a first-generation Canadian woman of Indian heritage, cataloguing such traces for Singh entails foregrounding personal and collective histories of racialised and gendered violence – histories that have frequently been marginalised and even excluded from dominant historical narratives. Singh's desire to undertake this process also emphasises her need for ownership or control over her own body, her own archive, something that has all too frequently been denied to Indigenous and other racialised peoples.

In emphasising the liminal status of coloured South Africans throughout history, Wicomb centres the role of race in conditions of precarity. Butler uses precarity to name a "politically induced condition in which certain populations suffer from failing social and economic networks of support and become differentially exposed to injury, violence, and death" (*Precarious Life*, 25). As Butler notes, there are no invulnerable bodies, but there are differential distributions of precarity. This emphasis demands that we consider the different ways that vulnerability manifests; its relationship to racialization in settler colonial contexts; and how vulnerability is reproduced over time. I argue that a specifically *transgenerational* form of precarity is registered in both Wicomb and Erdrich's novels as an integral component of the machinations of settler colonialism. Butler's work on precarity argues that neoliberal capitalism has rendered more bodies than ever before precarious. However, placing this into the specific contexts of the United States and South Africa, it is evident that making Indigenous bodies precarious has always been integral to the functioning of the necropolitical regime that is the settler colonial state (Mbembe, 2008). Produced through coloniality, precarity thus precedes its modern neoliberal manifestations. Creating and

sustaining conditions by which Indigenous peoples are rendered precarious is specifically necessary to the settler colonial state because, as Tuck and Yang note, the continued presence of Indigenous peoples – "who make a priori claims to land and ways of being – is a constant reminder that the settler colonial project is incomplete" (9). The reproduction of precarity, which intensifies through conditions perpetuated under neoliberal capitalism, furthers the settler state's necropolitical project.

The way that precarity is reproduced through coloniality is inseparable from processes of racialization, which have irrevocably shaped the socio-spatial landscapes of the United States and South Africa. As Byrd observes: "Racialization and colonization have worked simultaneously to other and abject entire peoples so they can be enslaved, excluded, removed, and killed in the name of progress and capitalism" (cited in Lowe, 10). By attributing racial meaning to the bodies of the colonised, colonial authorities shaped how individuals would relate to socio-economic structures and institutional systems, including housing, education and employment. Even as this manifests in distinct ways across the United States and South Africa, processes of racialization were employed to dictate the spatial arrangements of the nation by legally dispossessing those categorised as non-white of land, resources and autonomy (both bodily and spatial). In the United States, this particularly impacted Native Americans and African Americans. As Cheyfitz notes:

> The emergence of the idea of race as a scientific category in the first half of the nineteenth century in the United States was simultaneous with the emergence of biology as a category of knowledge and scientific racism as a mode of justifying both the enslavement of African Americans and the genocide of American Indians (Cheyfitz, 'What is an Indian?', 59).

Native Americans were formally racialised in 1846 through the landmark case of *U.S. v. Rogers*: a case that "represents the historic shift in emphasis from *Cherokee* Indian to Cherokee *Indian*, that is, from cultural logic to bio-logic" (Cheyfitz, 'What is an Indian?', 60, emphasis in original). This process informed the implementation of the Dawes Act (or General Allotment Act) of 1887, which broke up commonly-held tribal reservations by turning parcels of land into property for individuals registered on tribal rolls, while any 'surplus' land became federal property. In *The Plague of Doves*, this piece of legislation allows Mooshum to inherit a plot of land on the reservation as a teenager, where his daughter Geraldine lives in the contemporary timeline. Yet, for tribes across the United States (including the Ojibwe), the implications of the Act were disastrous, as it divided collectively-owned reservation land into privately-owned allotments, returning any 'surplus' land to the state. This process not

only dispossessed Indigenous tribes of substantial resources but amounted to an act of epistemic violence, through the imposition of a Lockean paradigm of land as private property.[61] As Tuck and Yang observe, this process is emblematic of settler colonialism more broadly:

> In the process of settler colonialism, land is remade into property and human relationships to land are restricted to the relationship of the owner to his property. Epistemological, ontological, and cosmological relationships to land are interred, indeed made pre-modern and backward. Made savage (5).

The implementation of the Dawes Act in 1887, then, undermined and forcibly disrupted existing Indigenous relations with the land, of which the majority were rooted in collective modes of occupation and stewardship. One of the effects of this, as Cheyfitz notes, was the "assimilation of the Indians into the American dream of property-holding individualism" (*Columbia Guide,* 23). This individualistic mindset motivates the "town fever" in the novel, which drives the town-founders on an almost-fatal expedition to claim and settle land (113). The palimpsestic landscape of the novel, then, not only bears traces of the physical forms of colonial conflict that have played out on its surface, but it is also marked by the epistemological conflict between opposing Indigenous and settler narratives of the land.

In South Africa, race was employed to justify the dispossession and later relocation of Khoisan and Bantu groups, as well as the enslavement of others from further afield (including Mozambique, Malaysia and Madagascar). While the 1913 Natives Land Act started this process by regulating the ability of black South Africans to acquire land, the 1950 Group Areas Act furthered spatial segregation by assigning urban living and business areas according to strict racial groupings. In both cases, these acts were motivated by the logic that "landscape" was a "resource which was too valuable for South Africans who were not classified as 'white'", resulting in their being assigned inferior parcels of land (Beningfield, 267). In both the United States and South Africa, colonial authorities implemented physiological modes of racial definition to impose new inscriptions on the landscape. The ramifications of such policies are narrativised in *David's Story,* as Wicomb retells the history of the Griqua people: a group with mixed Khoi, European and Asian heritage, who were classified as coloured under apartheid. Wicomb's narrative recalls the Griqua's removal from

[61] Locke's political philosophy of natural law, which dismissed Indigenous cultivations of the land, served to legitimise colonial policies of dispossession in the United States. As Theresa Richardson observes, Indigenous peoples in the Americas "served as a testing ground" for John Locke's racialised arguments about "legitimate sources of equality and inequality among men based on property rights and labor" (102-3).

Griqualand West in 1843 following the discovery of diamonds and the Griqua peoples' migrations to establish a new homeland.

Wicomb's writing reveals the ways that corporeal mappings of race are entwined with the landscape. The novel emphasises steatopygia – a term used to name the fat deposits found in the buttocks of Khoi women – as a motif that recurs across generations as a symbol of racialised violence, originating with Baartman's display as the "Hottentott Venus" (Wicomb, 135). In Wicomb's narrative, steatopygia serves as a reminder of how nationalist projects perpetuate the racialization and sexualization of women – even ostensibly liberatory movements, such as those led by Le Fleur and the ANC. As Graham has noted, Wicomb's treatment of Dulcie reinforces the link between land and (gendered) body. Graham's generative reading situates Dulcie's character in relation to Baartman to demonstrate how, "even within resistance movements, power struggles play out on human bodies, and especially (as throughout history) on the bodies of coloured or Khoi-San women" (151). However, Wicomb's interest in how race informs the body and space is not limited to gendered configurations. By emphasising the transgenerational legacies of historic processes of racialization, Wicomb negotiates the liminal position of the coloured community within South Africa more broadly.

Considering how the process of racialization operated in relation to space under apartheid, the white settler government defined race and accordingly used this to determine their skin colour. As Timothy Strode observes, this act epitomises the ontological supremacy that white settlers assumed and asserted through employing the power to define race – as well as how those definitions would impact space (166). Formalised under apartheid, coloured is already a liminal and inherently disruptive racial category. This is reflected in the wording of the 1950 Group Areas Act:

> 2. (1) For the purposes of this Act, there shall be the following groups: a white group, in which shall be included any person who in appearance, obviously is, or who is generally accepted as a white person, other than a person who although in appearance is obviously a white person, is generally accepted as a coloured person; a native group, in which shall be included: (i) any person who in fact is, or is generally accepted as a member of an aboriginal race or tribe of Africa […] and (ii) any woman to whichever race, tribe or class she may belong, between whom and a person who is a member of a native group there exists a marriage or who cohabits with such a person; a coloured group, in which shall be included: (i) any person who is not a member of the white group or of the native group; and (ii) any woman, to whichever race, tribe or class she may belong, between whom and a person who is a member

> of the coloured group there exists a marriage or who cohabits with such a person (cited in Strode, 166).

While these linguistic definitions of race ostensibly are rooted in biological essentialism, this is undermined by the inherent instability of the categories. Being registered as white, for example, is dependent only on community acceptance rather than any biological basis. As Wicomb explores in *Playing in the Light* (2006), though the apartheid system imposed strict racial definitions on the population, categories were inherently unstable, which resulted in movement between categories. The instability of racial definitions manifests uniquely in the status of the coloured, a category that is only identifiable through what one is not: "any person who is not a member of the white group or of the native group" (cited in Strode, 166). Subsequently, anyone who did not fit into the former two categories was labelled coloured – including the Griqua and others of mixed heritage, as well as the Khoisan and Indian and Asian migrants. As a category frequently used to represent those with mixed ethnic heritage, the very presence of the coloured identity in South Africa disrupts the black and white binary that apartheid is rooted in. As such, it unsettles the processes of categorization that are inherent to coloniality.

David's wife Sally considers being coloured an opportunity to escape the concerns that plague the black and white populations: "I'd have thought [that] is the beauty of being coloured, that we need not worry about roots at all, that it's altogether a good thing to start afresh […] why burden ourselves with the dreary stuff of roots and tradition?" (27-8). Yet, through detailing the traces of racialization that mark David's body, Wicomb suggests the difficulty of starting "afresh", even in the new South Africa. This narrative preoccupation reflects David's own ambivalence about his mixed heritage, revealing the precarious position of coloured individuals within South Africa. A recurrent emphasis on David's eyes suggest a biological connection between him and the Griqua chief Le Fleur, from whom he may or may not be descended. Yet, they also serve as a constant reminder of his coloured status and thus his alterity in the context of the black South African majority. As the narrator observes:

> There is no hint of a Griqua slant in those eyes. They are a soft, feminine green flecked with the pale lights of his fury. Sally will never guess how he hates those eyes, fake doll's eyes dropped as if by accident into his brown skin (98).

A token of his European ancestry, David's eyes mark his physical and cultural difference, symbolising the reason that he will never be truly accepted into the anti-apartheid movement. David's physical features manifest the physical space of the colonial contact zone and its

associated originary acts of colonial violence. The Griqua population are descended from intermarriages and sexual relations between the triad of European settlers, Indigenous Khoisan, and slave populations imported from the East and West coasts of Africa, Madagascar and Asia. By framing his eyes as unnatural David implicitly suggests that these relations should have never taken place. The description of "fake doll's eyes" evokes the inherently inorganic nature of the colonial contact zone – particularly the presence of the European settlers and the imported slave population, "dropped" into the landscape of the Western Cape. This history is also invoked by the narrator when describing Le Fleur, who suggests that his "mixture of Malayan-Madagascan slave, French missionary, and Khoisan hunter blood had produced a perfect blend of high cheekbones, bronze skin, and bright green almond eyes" (39). Through the repeated emphasis on the physical similarities between Le Fleur and David and the oppression they face due to their heritage, Wicomb places the precarity faced by coloured individuals in South Africa on a continuum that began on the colonial frontier and which still persists into the post-apartheid period. Wicomb's narrative suggests that the liminality of coloured individuals in the new South Africa directly informs their heightened vulnerability, epitomised through Dulcie and David's suggested treatment at the hands of the movement.[62]

Erdrich's novel, too, understands the body as an archive that registers colonial histories. Erdrich's engagement with the body facilitates the negotiation of how settler and Native populations have been affected by their shared past. As Stirrup notes, a recurring theme in Erdrich's fiction is "the affective and *altering* nature of contact for both" settlers and Indigenous peoples – and this process of transformation is registered in corporeal terms (157, emphasis in original). Erdrich – herself of Ojibwe, French and German-American heritage – emphasises the extent to which Indigenous and settler populations have intermixed, considering the altering nature of contact at a physiological level. Evelina's realization that "history works itself out in the living" is brought to bear on the descendants of all those involved in the lynching – perpetrators and victims alike. At an embodied level, this convergence is registered by Evelina, who observes how "some of us have mixed in the spring of our existence both guilt and victim" (243). Consequently, "there is no unraveling the rope", when these histories of contact, settlement, and dispossession, are reproduced in intertwined bloodlines. Across the novel, and in her fiction more broadly, Erdrich resists any neat distinction between Native and settler, instead asserting that "[w]e are all mixed up together" (Erdrich, cited in Stirrup, 154). Though Wicomb and Erdrich both highlight how the legacies of the colonial frontier manifest through the body and centre those that identify

[62] David is never fully trusted by the movement and dies in suspicious circumstances following the discovery of his name on a hit list.

as mixed race, Erdrich is less preoccupied with ethnicity. This is understandable given the way that Native Americans have not been racialised to the same extent as South Africans were under apartheid. Yet, the legacies of racialization still persist in *The Plague of Doves*, which manifests within the Native community through transgenerational precarity. Erdrich traces the way that precarity is a transgenerational condition for Indigenous peoples in North America. Yet, she also demonstrates how Indigenous communities can overcome this, by recovering other forms of "networks of support" that have been disrupted through the colonial process (Butler, 25). Such forms of community refute the logic of individuality and self-responsibility that is integral to neoliberalism.

Transgenerational precarity is traced through the displacement of the Métis who, much like the Griqua that are the focus of *David's Story*, developed a distinct culture in Canada following the mixing of settler and First Nations peoples. Through the Milk family, Erdrich traces the way that colonial logics of otherness or difference were mapped onto the landscape. Their racial and cultural dislocation as Métis peoples directly results in their physical displacement as they are forced to flee their Canadian home. As Stirrup observes, the family are "themselves doubly displaced, first as descendants of both European and indigenous lines, and then, most importantly, as Métis forced to flee across the border to escape persecution after the failed rebellion" (Stirrup, 156). Through Shamengwa, Erdrich explores how transgenerational precarity manifests at an individual corporeal level. She registers the body as a site of memory that becomes an archive for those histories made unspeakable in the wider public sphere. The Milk family's physical and cultural dislocation is registered in Shamengwa's misshapen arm, which he injured as a child and that never fully healed: "my parents did not think to take me to a doctor", he recalls: "They did not notice, I suppose. I did tell my father about it, but he only nodded, pretending that he had heard, and went back to whatever he was doing" (200). His mark of physical frailty serves to embody the heightened material vulnerability that results from the social death of Indigenous peoples in North America. Shamengwa attributes his disability to settler colonialism, connecting the collective rupture of dispossession to his own physical injury. Referring to Louis Riel's failed rebellion in which his family participated, Shamengwa asserts: "I've thought about this, brother. If Riel had won, our parents would have stayed in Canada, whole people. Not broken. We would have been properly raised up. My arm would work" (33). Shamengwa's broken arm becomes a symbol for the fractured Métis community, following the suppression of Riel's rebellion, and all of the other ruptures that were brought about by North American settler colonialism: the breaking of Indigenous people's relation to the land, to human and nonhuman others. While disability studies scholarship has generally critiqued the use of disability as metaphor within literary texts, Clare Barker points to examples of

postcolonial and Indigenous literatures where metaphors of disability "emerge organically from writers' postcolonial concerns" (26). In the novels that Barker examines, she argues that disability is "not side-lined"; rather the connection between an individual's disability and their postcolonial context is "constructed as a complex matrix of factors operating between the individual, history, society and its often violent machinations" (26). In this way, Shamengwa's disability is not simply a metaphor for the rupturing violence of colonialism but is also a material consequence of the transgenerational legacies of colonial violence, which take shape through a heightened bodily vulnerability experienced by Indigenous peoples. Shamengwa's oral narrative, which details his accident and the neglect suffered during childhood, foregrounds the way that cycles of violence are reproduced across generations.

Yet, implicit within any consideration of injury is the idea of recovery. Through detailing processes of imperfect healing, Erdrich examines to what extent it is possible for bodies, individual and collective, to recover from trauma. This question raises particular challenges in situations where the conditions that led to the moment of injury are still in place – for example, when Native Americans continue to exist in a state of politically-sustained subalternity. However, I suggest that we can understand Shamengwa's imperfectly healed injury to signify resilience and renewal. Shamengwa's arm comes to represent him, as he is named for it: Shamengwa (which he is thereafter called) is the Ojibwe name for a Monarch butterfly. Yet, this is not a source of anguish for, as he recalls, "[t]he full blood children gave it to me as a kind of blessing, I think […] It was an acceptance of my 'wing arm.'" (200) This act of communal acceptance in his childhood is reflected in Shamengwa's status as an elder of the community in the novel's contemporary timeline. Following Barker, such acts of acceptance can be understood to exemplify the strength of Indigenous communities. The Ojibwe community's acceptance of Shamengwa demonstrates their 'cultural health', which Barker suggests is present when a society incorporates "the presence of disabled people into [their] infrastructures and ideologies, and [naturalises] embodied diversity as a common strength" (27). Despite the fact that pre-colonial communities have been irrevocably disrupted – or "broken" to use Shamengwa's phrasing – it is suggested that they have found a way to heal in a different form. This crucially does not undo the trauma they have suffered but gestures towards the adaptability of Indigenous communities, refuting a static definition of Indigenous cultures. If precarity is dependent, as Butler suggests, on "failing social and economic networks of support", Erdrich's work speaks to how, when the state fails to protect or, indeed, actively *neglects* Indigenous bodies, community can provide alternative sources of support (*Frames of War,* 25). We see this enacted through the processes of care that the Milk family practices for each other and, frequently, for those in the wider

community. From Clementine's patient treatment of her ageing father and uncle, to Judge Coutts's adoption of the troubled Corwin Peace, various characters together enact a different form of community. Notably, this is not rooted in the notion of a nuclear family, but in an ethic of collective responsibility and reciprocity.

Conclusion

To return to the question I raised at the beginning of this chapter, how do Erdrich and Wicomb's literary engagements with the archive bear on a politics of recognition? I have argued that both novels foreground counterhistories that have been determined unspeakable through a politics of recognition, which only facilitates the articulation of specific histories of suffering. By giving voice to those histories that are not privileged within the terms set by the nation state, both novels reject a recognition-based politics that does not attend to the enduring intersectional legacies of colonial violence. In Erdrich's novel, the unspeakable pertains primarily to the violence experienced by Indigenous communities in North America, as well as the precarity which they continue to experience under the neoliberal settler state. Though *The Plague of Doves* is not explicitly concerned with the Canadian TRC (established the same year as the novel's publication), we can position Erdrich's engagement with the archive within this socio-political context and the conversations that were taking place across the United States and Canada around the time of writing.[63] Wicomb's novel, of course, traces the way that an independent, formerly colonised nation continues to marginalise certain bodies according to ethnocentric and androcentric biases. As such, it charts how the colonial government's suppression of the Griqua is echoed in the post-apartheid era, as the coloured population (and the Griqua) are in a position of liminality. As I have shown, Wicomb's novel is concerned with intersecting racialised and gendered forms of violence, which are epitomised through the ungrievable nature of Dulcie's treatment and the abuses she experiences.

Yet, while both novels are concerned with recovering unspeakable counterhistories, they also employ examples of narrative refusal. This strategy enables them to critique a recognition-based politics, while revealing the structures of erasure that have prevented these histories from being vocalised. For Wicomb, the failure to adequately represent Dulcie is an act of narrative refusal at the level of form. It is a rejection of a politics of recognition, as it literally represents the impossibility of representing a subaltern history within the machinations of the postcolonial state. Thus, Wicomb suggests, a politics of recognition such

[63] Erdrich briefly engages with the history of the Indian Residential School system through Shamengwa's narrative. This history is explored more substantially in *LaRose* (2016): the third novel in Erdrich's so-called "justice" trilogy and thus a sequel of sorts to *The Plague of Doves*.

as that advanced by the South African TRC is incomplete, as it only facilitates the recognition of certain types of suffering. Erdrich, on the other hand, is seemingly more receptive to a politics of recognition. While Mooshum enacts a trickster form of narrative refusal at the level of plot through his storytelling, the wider novel sits in contrast to this. As noted, formally the novel augments a politics of recognition, as the reader's understanding is predicated on being able to collate and interpret all of the different narratives together. However, to register Erdrich's novel as supportive of a politics of recognition is to ignore the subversive nature of the counterhistories that she invokes. By recovering underexplored histories of Indigenous lynchings and foregrounding the ongoing precarity faced by Indigenous peoples, Erdrich makes this suffering speakable. This act in itself can be read as disruptive. Further, by foregrounding the oral and spatial as vital archival sources of knowledge, Erdrich disrupts the colonial epistemology of the archive.

In this chapter I have examined some of the ways in which the Western archive, and the accordant narratives, epistemologies and systems of value that it produces, can be disrupted, unsettled, or otherwise brought into question through literature. Wicomb and Erdrich enact this process by either recovering that which has been excluded, cast out as holding no value, or by questioning the very system of valuation entirely. This analysis leads to the question of whether the colonial logic of the Western archive can ever be overcome or, indeed, if it can even be deployed for the purposes of disruption. Considering if the settler colonial archive can ever be decolonised, Métis anthropologist Zoe Todd and Gwichyà Gwich'in scholar Crystal Fraser remind us of the "original intent" of state archives: "to create national narratives that seek to legitimise the nation state by excluding Indigenous voices, bodies, economies, histories, and socio-political structures" (Todd and Fraser). As such, they argue that the decolonization of the archives "can only ever be partial", as "the structure and function of archives remain bound to National imaginaries and histories". While Todd and Fraser's analysis pertains to formal archives, we can bear this in mind to consider what possibilities the novel offers to contest the colonial logic of the archive. If specific forms of knowledge are reproduced or, alternately, erased through the Western archive, then literature can provide a space whereby such paradigms can be negotiated. Reading *The Plague of Doves* through this lens, Erdrich's novel tells us that decolonising the archive isn't just about which narratives are included, but *who* is responsible for acts of curation, as well as *which* forms of archive are incorporated. An expansive epistemological understanding of the archive must include the oral, the spatial and the bodily, while accounting for the movement between and across these sites. In *David's Story,* Wicomb doesn't offer a way forward in the same way, but nevertheless provides a substantial critique of South African efforts to decolonise the archive by highlighting some of their failures, particularly pertaining to the androcentric and

ethnocentric biases that are always entangled with the legacies of coloniality. Both texts demonstrate the way in which Indigenous or anti-colonial nationalist movements do not necessarily escape the oppressive and destructive practices associated with colonial nationalisms. Rather, these novels suggest that Indigenous or anti-colonial movements must find a way to imagine themselves without reproducing the kinds of racialised and gendered inequalities inscribed through the colonial archive. Crucial to this is a critical engagement with those figures that are responsible for shaping historic narratives.

To consider the potential that literature offers for ways to move *beyond* the colonial logic of the archive, I conclude with an example from Erdrich's novel that evokes a fundamental relationality between the land and the body. Here, the land and the body are registered as co-constitutive archives in a way that exceeds the processes of racialization that have marked Indigenous bodies and lands in the United States. Erdrich instead foregrounds an ontological mode of relating to the land. When Neve Harp visits Evelina and her family, she asks to go "back to the beginning of things […] to talk about how the town of Pluto came to be and why it was inside the original reservation boundaries, even though hardly any Indians lived in Pluto" (84). Through the responses of the Milk family members, Erdrich positions dispossession as an embodied loss that takes on a physical manifestation. Evelina observes, "both of the old men's faces became like Mama's – quiet, with an elaborate reserve, and something else that has stuck in my heart ever since. I saw that the loss of their land was lodged inside of them forever. This loss would enter me, too" (84). Here, the loss of land takes on material form, as it is "lodged" inside the bodies of Evelina's family. This physical manifestation of loss creates a material connection between Evelina, her family members and her ancestors. Recalling Wolfe's assertion that settler colonialism is a structure not an event, Evelina's narrativization emphasises that dispossession is *continually* being enacted, materially experienced by each generation, even as they inherit the loss of their ancestors. Indigenous dispossession thus refracts at multiple scales, experienced simultaneously as individual and collective trauma, past and present. Following Byrd, we can understand the land as a catalyst that triggers an ethic of relationality:

> For American Indians, who have lived for tens of thousands of years on the lands that became the United States two hundred and thirty years ago, the land both remembers life and its loss and serves itself as a mnemonic device that triggers the ethics of relationality with the sacred geographies that constitute indigenous peoples' histories (*Transit of Empire,* 118).

Evelina's narrative evokes a form of relationality that exists between the self and the land, through her embodied experience of dispossession. If "the land […] remembers life and its loss", as Byrd writes, the body should be understood as an interconnected "mnemonic device" due to its affective relationship with the land (118). Evelina's narrative suggests that it is impossible to separate the body from a consideration of the land. This moves beyond a focus on trauma, such as the transgenerational trauma of dispossession, towards recovering an ontology that facilitates different modes of relating to space. The enduring connection between Evelina and her ancestral land suggests a distinction between Western notions of land (which are primarily rooted in terms of property) and Indigenous conceptualizations, which are suggested here to be ontological. This worldview is not only articulated by Evelina, but also by Judge Coutts who suggests that the land is not only integral to Ojibwe identity but to *survival*. As he observes, "there is something to the love and knowledge of the land and its relationship to dreams – that's what the old people had. That's why as a tribe we exist to the present" (115). Such provocations prompt us to consider how to conceptualise the body's relation to the land beyond a logic of coloniality – a question that I will expand upon in my final chapter, through an analysis of novels by Silko and Duiker.

2

Negotiating Indigeneity in a Global Context:
Thomas King's *Truth and Bright Water* and Zakes Mda's *The Heart of Redness*

Have I not been your faithful sidekick?
Have I not been your faithful Indian guide?
[…] Your insider
reading the trail, trailing the readings
so as to point a way?
– Heid E. Erdrich, 'The Lone Reader and Tonchee Fistfight in Pages' (2012)

This chapter marks a turning point in this thesis, as I move to examine how selected Native American and South African authors have used literature to assert a resistance not only to colonialism and its legacies but to the neoliberal order which is its new inscription. While the previous chapter was focused largely on the way in which literature offers the possibility to remediate the past by negotiating the archive, here I am concerned with how literature is being used to unsettle contemporary processes of exploitation and erasure that are integral to capitalist globalization. As I argued in the previous chapter, Indigenous lives are frequently rendered ungrievable and Indigenous suffering is made unspeakable in the public sphere, unless it adheres to the terms of recognition set by the state. The erasure of Indigenous and other marginalised peoples' suffering that occurs through neoliberalism should be understood as an intensification of historic colonial processes of erasure. Subaltern suffering is rendered unspeakable on a global scale, thereby furthering the colonial/capitalist project of expansion and accumulation.

Of particular interest in this chapter is how images of indigeneity circulate unevenly within capitalist modernity – how some symbols of indigeneity are privileged, while others are obfuscated – and how specific industries, such as the literary industry, perpetuate these dynamics while also offering the possibility for disruption. One of the primary modes

through which the Indigenous is made visible within capitalist modernity is via a commodified and exoticised aesthetic. This is a process in which mainstream forms of cultural narratives, such as film and literature, are implicated. The exoticised commodification of Native American cultures (which are, undoubtedly, amongst the most widely appropriated), manifests across a multitude of American products that bear Indigenous names and imagery – from cars (e.g. Jeep's 'Cherokee' model) to food (such as Land O'Lakes butter, which bears the sexualised cartoon image of a Native American maiden in 'traditional' costume). Other examples, such as the *Winnetou* series by German author Karl May and the popular South African restaurant chain Spur, which features a headdress-wearing Native American as its logo, reveal how such images circulate and are reinscribed globally.[64] This circulation is highly pertinent to the question of world literature, as the transnational circulation of a commodified aesthetic of indigeneity indirectly informs how Indigenous peoples are framed in popular media and cultural narratives. Indigenous peoples are thus impacted by a simultaneous *hyper*visibility and *in*visibility within global modernity: hypervisible as cartoons, stereotypes and commodities, yet invisible as complex, contemporary peoples.

Symbols of certain Indigenous groups – including Native Americans, but also the San in Southern Africa – are globally recognisable, their images frequently used to promote tourism and other industries. Yet the incorporation of exoticised, or unreal, Indigenous aesthetics into global commodity culture acts as a screen for the very real systemic and ongoing forms of oppression to which Indigenous peoples are disproportionately exposed. The glorification of romanticised images of indigeneity acts as a mechanism for erasure, serving to mask the reality of systemic oppression and continuing forms of exploitation that many Indigenous and other marginalised postcolonial communities face. Systemic forms of violence that manifest across intersecting lines of race, gender, class and cultural heritage are, as I argued in the introduction to this thesis, reproduced through the machinations of coloniality. With this in mind, then, the way that the commodification of marginalised cultures occurs concomitantly with coloniality is of key concern here. Two industries in which these concerns cohere are tourism and the global literary marketplace. Historically, literature has played a vital role in manifestations of globalization during the era of European imperialism. Fundamental in constructing early narratives of empire for readers in Europe, travel narratives to the British colonies and settler diaries of the American West encouraged

[64]Originally the Spur logo took the form of a literal spur on a cowboy boot, but was changed to the image of a "red Indian," in the words of CEO Allen Ambor, as "a signal to people of color in South Africa to show them that they were more than welcome in Spur" (Ambor cited in Mulgrew, 347-8). See Nick Mulgrew's 'A Taste for Strife; or, Spur in the South African Imaginary' for further discussion of the restaurant's use of Indigenous symbolism.

travel to exotic locations. This was a multidirectional process, as travel was necessary for the population of European colonies and, in turn, settlement increased the demand for travel narratives of the frontier (Gilmour, 18-19). In our contemporary moment of capitalist globalization, the literary and tourism industries continue to be interconnected. Literary scholar Simon During attributes the rising "interest in world literature" to "the recent rapid extension of cross-border flows of tourists and cultural goods around the world, including literary fiction" (cited in Apter, 2). The touristic and literary industries alike claim to provide their consumers with 'authenticity', by granting access to a distant culture, history or landscape. Authenticity in these contexts is frequently premised on the idea of a genuine and 'unspoilt' culture removed from outside influences, presuming a static perception of culture. Yet, that which is determined to be culturally authentic is often a construction, created for the purpose of appealing to global consumers. Commenting on the way the tourism industry in Africa functions in relation to Indigenous or tribal communities, South African scholar Keyan Tomaselli observes:

> Tourism delivers feelings, sights, sounds and aromas of place, space and race; tourism promises the exotic, the unusual, and in the wild, offers serenity, a return to a peaceful, pristine and perfect unspoiled Eden. The inhabitants of the tourist Eden are often people like the Bushmen, the Masaai, the Zulu and the Himba […] They are like us, but they are not like us; they are represented as ethnic, biological and cultural residues of the developed world's past (20).

Dean MacCannell's concept of "staged authenticity" (1973) usefully names the process through which a local culture is staged to create the illusion of authenticity for tourists. Much of what occurs in cultural tourism is such a fabrication, specifically created to fulfil the tourist's desire for cultural Otherness. As Graham Huggan observes, quoting John Frow: "'The appeal of exotic peoples and places constitutes tourism's staple diet: 'the product the industry sells is a commodified relation to the [cultural] other' (Frow 1991:150)" (*The Postcolonial Exotic,* 178). One question that this exchange raises and to which I will return throughout this chapter is: who is responsible for these fabrications and for whose benefit are they produced?

Like the cultural and heritage tourism industries, much of what falls into the categories of postcolonial, Indigenous and world literature has traditionally been seen as a means of providing "a window on different parts of the world" (Damrosch, 15). But the notion of reading literature as cultural artefact has been sharply critiqued by scholars across disciplines, including Ojibwe author David Treuer, who takes issue with the "idea that Native

literature […] can perform culture" (76). In Emily Apter's polemic *Against World Literature,* she argues that, within the world literary industry, the "celebration of nationally and ethnically branded 'differences' […] have been niche-marketed as commercialised identities" (2). The phenomenon that Apter observes raises questions about the role of literature in perpetuating exoticised simulations of cultural authenticity. Further, this approach perpetuates an asymmetric power dynamic that is itself characteristic of coloniality. Postcolonial studies scholar Sherene Razack warns that the

> cultural differences approach reinforces an important epistemological cornerstone of imperialism: the colonised possess a series of knowable characteristics and can be studied, known, and managed accordingly by the colonizers whose own complicity remains masked (cited in Hoy, 5).

The notion that literature can be used by Western readers to increase their understanding of Indigenous or postcolonial cultures, then, perpetuates this power imbalance, while reinforcing a mindset that literatures from marginalised cultures are ethnographic artefact as opposed to a (commodified) construction.

These issues are brought to the fore in the poem 'The Lone Reader and Tonchee Fistfight in Pages' by Ojibwe poet Heid E. Erdrich, an excerpt of which serves as the epigraph to this chapter. Erdrich's poem is a form of cultural production that argues for the representational failure of literature. While Wicomb, as discussed in the previous chapter, engages with the impossibility of representing unspeakable histories, Erdrich here takes issue with the expectation placed on Indigenous authors to write in a way that renders their cultures accessible to outsiders. To interrogate this convention, Erdrich self-reflexively deploys the trope of the Indigenous guide: an archetype that is commonly found across many cultural narratives of (colonial and postcolonial) contact zones. Most commonly, it is used to perpetuate a dynamic that privileges Western access to the culture or territory of an 'exotic' Other. In the poem's title, Erdrich satirises Sherman Alexie's acclaimed 1993 short story 'The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven', which in turn references the comedic figure of Tonto as the archetypal Native American guide. Comparing herself to the Lemhi Shoshone woman Sacajawea, who helped to guide the Lewis and Clark expedition through Louisiana, Erdrich's narrator asks the reader:

> "Have I not been your faithful sidekick?
> Have I not been your faithful Indian guide?
> […] Your insider

> reading the trail, trailing the readings
> so as to point a way?" (H. Erdrich, 123).

By creating a parallel between the physical movement into an unknown territory with the process of reading a literary work produced in a different cultural context, Erdrich uses the trope of the Indigenous guide to critique the expectations placed on Indigenous authors to perform the role of cultural guide to a non-Indigenous audience. Through the titular invocation of Alexie's short story, Erdrich can also be read as challenging Alexie for his role in propagating this paradigm.[65] Erdrich's poem ends with an act of refusal, as the narrator's tongue "refuses to fork" (123). The image of a split tongue gestures towards the narrator's refusal to mediate between languages, between cultures, as a guide between Indigenous and Western paradigms – or, indeed, a bodily refusal due to the impossibility of the task. Even though linguistic translation may be possible, genuine cultural translation is difficult to determine. But the split tongue also evokes the image of a serpent, suggesting that the narrator is not being entirely truthful and cannot necessarily be trusted. Erdrich's subversive and playful engagements with literary conventions, which provoke us to consider *how* literature can serve to challenge reader or market expectations, raise some of the key concerns of this chapter.

While prevalent in discussions of cultural tourism and cultural production, authenticity is also imbricated within the very structures of settler colonialism. In his field-defining work on settler colonialism, Wolfe understands repressive authenticity to be a common settler colonial strategy. As a style of romantic stereotyping, repressive authenticity

> eliminates large numbers of empirical natives from official reckonings and, as such, is often concomitant with genocidal practice. Indeed […] assimilation can be a more effective mode of elimination than conventional forms of killing, since it does not involve such a disruptive affront to the rule of law that is ideologically central to the cohesion of settler society (Wolfe, 402).

It can therefore be understood as an insidious form of erasure that is more 'palatable' to the colonising society, but that ultimately enables increased settler access to territory. Repressive authenticity renders those inauthentic that do not embody the construction, which is itself set by the settler coloniser. Wolfe primarily draws out the structural implications of this

[65] Sherman Alexie is perhaps the most well-known contemporary Native American writer to have achieved mainstream commercial success. His works (which include fiction, poetry, non-fiction and film) are widely popular with non-Indigenous audiences.

strategy such as the racialization of Aboriginal peoples in Australia and the impact that this had for the assimilation of lighter skinned children, as well as those who were not classed as 'full-blooded'. However, I use Wolfe's approach to speak to the discursive construction of authentic indigeneity – that which can be understood as 'cultural authenticity' – specifically within the context of capitalist modernity. Simulations of cultural authenticity that circulate through popular narratives and processes of commodification are frequently rooted in stereotypes. As such, they contribute to erasure by denying complex identities to marginalised peoples.

We can productively place Wolfe's work in dialogue with Vizenor's concept of "manifest manners": a term that names "the simulations of dominance; the notions and misnomers that are read as the authentic and sustained as representations of Native American Indians" (*Manifest Manners,* 158). As with Wolfe, Vizenor foregrounds how settler societies use constructed narratives in order to dispossess and dominate the people they colonise. Yet, while Wolfe is primarily concerned with historical processes of repressive authenticity employed by the settler colonial state, Vizenor considers the role that narratives of authenticity play in forms of cultural production. Vizenor's account is therefore valuable for examining the informal ways that simulations of cultural authenticity pervade commodity culture. Such simulations are not necessarily perpetuated by settler colonial states, but nevertheless serve to uphold processes of erasure that are at the heart of – and enable the reproduction of – settler colonialism. Across film and literature, as well as the tourism, sporting and countless other industries, portrayals of Native Americans are reduced to static, stereotypical constructs that serve to further dispossess Indigenous people of both complex personhood and futurity. Thomas King, in his non-fiction work *The Inconvenient Indian*, employs the notion of the "Dead Indian" to articulate this process. He writes: "Dead Indians are Garden of Eden-variety Indians. Pure, Noble, Innocent. Perfectly authentic […] Not a feather out of place. Live Indians are fallen Indians, modern, contemporary copies, not authentic at all, Indians by biological association only" (66). In creating this distinction, King echoes Vizenor's assertion that romanticised images of Indians render contemporary Indigenous people 'inauthentic'. As such, he demonstrates that it is impossible for any contemporary Native Americans to be truly authentic. Commenting on the consequences of such narratives, Vizenor observes that the "once bankable simulations of the savage as an impediment to developmental civilization, the simulations that audiences would consume in Western literature and motion pictures, *protracted the extermination of tribal cultures*" (*Manifest Manners,* 159, emphasis added). Over the past century this process has intensified, as discourses of cultural authenticity have been globalised at an unprecedented rate. One of the

effects of this is that constructed stereotypes of Native Americans are no longer only being reproduced in Western culture.

If, as Wolfe asserts, settler colonialism must be understood as a structure rather than an event, then it is imperative to ascertain how dispossession operates in the present and in relation to neocolonial processes. This includes better understanding the relationship between settler colonialism and capitalist globalization and the ways that the two implicitly and explicitly uphold one another. Following Wolfe, repressive authenticity is a settler colonial tool that systematically disenfranchises Indigenous peoples of their territory, setting ever-narrowing definitions of what indigeneity means. To understand the role of cultural production within this, it becomes necessary to consider Vizenor's analysis of discursive forms of erasure. Specifically, we need to ask how the exotification and commodification of Indigenous cultures, which occurs through capitalist globalization, serves to legitimise the hegemony produced through settler colonial and neocolonial power structures. However, to only focus on the way in which these industries serve to perpetuate exoticised simulations of Otherness fails to account for the possibilities that they offer for agentic engagement with an exploitative capitalist order, as well as the active negotiation of what indigeneity means. What, then, is the role of literature in facilitating – or alternatively, disrupting – these processes? In this context, the subversion of constructed narratives (of "manifest manners" to use Vizenor's term) whether in literature or other modes of cultural production has the potential for material consequences. When the full implications of repressive authenticity are considered – not solely in the context of settler colonialism but, too, the narratives that proliferate as a result of capitalism's commoditising imperative – the disruption of these constructions on a global scale is inherently political. Literature becomes a valuable tool through which agency can be recovered and processes of erasure resisted.

Two questions, then, that run through this chapter are: how do selected Native American and South African authors engage with indigeneity in relation to this paradigm of cultural commodification? And to what extent is it possible for authors to resist this process – to negotiate indigeneity in their own terms – while simultaneously producing literature for global consumption? To grapple with these concerns, this chapter will examine two novels: *Truth and Bright Water* (1999) by Thomas King and *The Heart of Redness* (2000) by Zakes Mda. In reading these texts together, I explore how two major Native American and South African authors negotiate questions of indigeneity and authenticity in relation to globalization, specifically through the interconnected industries of global tourism and the world literary system. Rather than looking at actual touristic practices, I am interested in how King and Mda deal with tourism through their fiction as an interconnected paradigm of global consumerism. The theme of tourism allows the authors to engage with the contemporary

processes of cultural commodification that occur in cross-cultural contact zones. By creating a sustained association between the literary and touristic industries, these authors foreground the way in which both serve to perpetuate exoticised narratives of authenticity. In doing so, they raise the question of how far *authors* are themselves involved in processes of self-exotification as well as the exotification of others. Both novels engage with the ways in which the literary and touristic industries seek to make the 'local' 'global', simultaneously offering opportunities for economic and social development, as well as the risk of exploitation. If, as Laura R. Graham and H. Glenn Penny assert, "Indigenous identities can never be simply local; they must always be negotiated in national, international, and, quite literally, global arenas", then literature, like tourism, can productively be considered a site of global contact in which such negotiations of indigeneity occur (15).

Thomas King, an American-Canadian writer of Cherokee, Greek and German descent, is one of North America's most widely read Indigenous authors. Published in 1999, *Truth and Bright Water* is a Bildungsroman, set over the Montana and Alberta prairies and seen through the eyes of its fourteen-year-old Blackfoot narrator, Tecumseh. King's novel foregrounds the extent to which the combined and uneven nature of capitalist development shapes the everyday lives of peripheral Indigenous communities. Truth, the fictional town on the American side of the border, and Bright Water, a fictional Blackfoot reserve in Canada, comprise two halves of a community that is destitute.[66] The reserve is geographically removed from economic centres, following the uneven development of roads in the region, as the "new highway from Pipestone [that] was going to pass through Truth and cross into Canada at Bright Water" was never built (King, *Truth and Bright Water,* 38).[67] Bright Water's disconnection manifests through the spectral frame of the abandoned highway bridge over the Shield River. Never completed, the bridge symbolises the lost potential of connecting Bright Water to a tourist economy, the once-promised "steady stream of tourists who would stop at the border to catch their breath before pushing up to Waterton or Banff, or dropping down into Glacier or the Yellowstone" (38). The novel is set in the build up to, and during, the annual Indian Days festival: the one time of year in which tourists visit the reserve in search of "real Indians" (234). Though the festival provides an economic lifeline for many, it relies on the commodified performance of an ostensibly Blackfoot culture. Such performances are not, in fact, rooted in Blackfoot cultural traditions but instead enact

[66] In Canada, the term 'reserve' is used, rather than 'reservation' as in the United States and 'band' rather than 'tribe'. As described in the Indian Act (1876), a reserve is a "tract of land, the legal title to which is vested in Her Majesty, that has been set apart by Her Majesty for the use and benefit of a band" (Government Of Canada, 'Consolidated Federal Laws of Canada, Indian Act'). The Indian Act is still in effect with a number of amendments.

[67] All subsequent in-text citations marked "King" refer to *Truth and Bright Water* unless otherwise specified.

recognisable stereotypes of 'indigeneity'. In King's novel, the (self-)commodification of Indigenous cultures serves to demonstrate how the bounded forces of settler colonialism and capitalist modernity structure Indigenous experiences.

The Heart of Redness is the third novel by Zakes Mda, the South African playwright and novelist. A multi-generational, historical saga, it follows Camagu – a Western-educated South African returned from exile in the United States – who finds himself in a rural Xhosa community in the Eastern Cape of South Africa. The novel comprises two intertwined narratives, both set in Qolorha-by-Sea, through which Mda moves continuously between two temporal frames. Qolorha is an historic landscape that is being repurposed for touristic development, a process that is reflected in the anglicised addendum that renames it for its touristic appeal. The historic narrative, which occurs during the Xhosa wars against the British, is centred on the prophecy of Nongqawuse and the subsequent cattle-killings of 1856-7.[68] The modern narrative takes place in the post-apartheid period and focuses on the descendants of those whose ancestors were divided by the prophecy. In the present, the historic divisions in the amaXhosa community take the form of two sects: the Believers, descended from the followers of the prophetess Nongqawuse, and the Unbelievers, who descend from those that opposed the cattle-killing. The historic rift has transformed to centre on the issue of whether to allow "a big company that owns hotels throughout southern Africa […] to build a casino on the Gxarha River mouth," to which "[t]ourists will come from all over the world to gamble and to play with their boats and surfboards" (Mda, 66). The proposed resort purports to offer economic prosperity and, with it, "[a]t last, Qolorha-by-Sea will see progress" (66). Yet, the development threatens the community's way of life as well as the local ecosystem. The end of the novel offers what is presented as a resolution: "a kind of tourism that will benefit the people, that will not destroy indigenous forests, that will not bring hordes of people who will pollute the rivers and drive away the birds" (201). The government declares Qolorha to be a national heritage site, which the narrative frames as an opportunity to promote ethical, community-driven forms of cultural and ecological tourism.

Both King and Mda's novels assume an international readership and set out to subversively engage with the exoticised imagery that circulates globally through commodified cultural narratives. *Truth and Bright Water* responds to the unique processes of erasure that affect Native American and First Nations communities: the simultaneous hypervisibility and invisibility that characterises the representation of Indigenous North Americans at national

[68] The historical events detailed in the earlier narrative are drawn largely from Jeff Peires's historical study *The Dead Will Arise: Nongqawuse and the Great Xhosa Cattle-Killing Movement of 1856–1857*, which Mda credits in the book's acknowledgements.

and global levels. *The Heart of Redness*, on the other hand, operates within a distinct cultural context with regard to the Khoisan and Xhosa in South Africa. As an Indigenous minority, the Khoisan experience of erasure in South Africa is comparable to that of Native Americans. Both were presented in colonial narratives as vanishing cultures and, in the contemporary moment, are depicted within mainstream discourse through exoticised imagery. In post-apartheid South Africa, the marginalization of the Khoisan has been exacerbated through the ANC's failure to incorporate them into transitional political processes. While the Xhosa, who represent a significant portion of the South African population, have not experienced this type of erasure, Mda's narrative highlights the ways in which *rural* Xhosa communities are subjected to a specific form of exoticism that denies their recognition as modern subjects. In the novel, such romanticising discourse is not only perpetuated by Westerners, such as the foreign tourists that visit the Eastern Cape, but also by urban South Africans who are removed from Xhosa cultural traditions.

Whereas the previous chapter examined two novels in a comparison sustained *throughout*, this chapter is structured in a way that allows me to deal with King and Mda's texts in sequence. By first exploring King's negotiation of commodified images of indigeneity, I can read Mda's novel in a context that enables me to consider how circulating images of Native Americans resonate globally. In this chapter, I argue that King and Mda, in distinct ways, self-reflexively utilise the form of the novel to reveal processes of commodification and expropriation that are perpetuated through global cultural industries. By deconstructing myths of authenticity, which are shown to be simulations, each disrupts the notion of a 'pure' local culture resisting global forces. In my analysis of *Truth and Bright Water,* I argue that through authorial performances King self-consciously reflects on his own analogous commodification of Indigenous cultures as the means of entry into the world literary system. However, by insisting on the inherent untranslatability of Native cultures, King resists the understanding of literature as cultural artefact and formally enacts narrative refusal to reject this paradigm. I argue that Mda broadly pursues an "open-ended" model of indigeneity (a term I borrow from Elleke Boehmer), which we can understand as being situated within a particular (multi)cultural moment of the South African transition. However, despite this inclusive approach, Mda constructs hierarchies of indigeneity that position the Khoisan as more 'authentically' Indigenous. I argue that this is achieved through associating the Khoisan with romantic tropes of Indigenous peoples – a characterization that appears at odds with Mda's disavowal of authenticity throughout the rest of the novel. Yet, I suggest that Mda reveals the 'authentic' to be a simulation, positioning the Khoisan as Indigenous by appropriating the globally-recognisable trope of the "ecologically noble Indian" (Nadasdy, 298). In doing so, he places the Khoi firmly into a *global* (rather than merely South African)

Indigenous imaginary. Crucially, this enables Mda to assert a postcolonial/ Indigenous resistance to the threat of global development, a recognisable feature of the postcolonial novel. Some critics have observed that King's writing does not manifest the "adversarial resistance to dominant sociopolitical structures and cultural codes" that has come to be expected of "minority writing". Unlike *The Heart of Redness*, *Truth and Bright Water* is not explicitly oppositional, thus not openly conforming to this expectation. (Dvorak, 214). Yet, as I demonstrate, King's novel can nevertheless be read as subversive.

My emphasis on resistance in this chapter is not to suggest that Indigenous or postcolonial subjects do not themselves participate in and benefit from capitalist processes, including self-commodification. Indeed, *The Heart of Redness* and *Truth and Bright Water* each depict local communities who are actively engaging with the tourist economy, including characters that seek to perpetuate Indigenous or traditional stereotypes in order to benefit financially. Yet, it is necessary to bear in mind the scales at which these forms of engagement operate and for whose benefit they are carried out. Capitalist industries, including the tourist industry, primarily work to benefit landowners and business owners, as well as larger corporate interests (such as resort developers), rather than local people. As postcolonial scholar Amy Rushton observes, contemporary tourism development frequently perpetuates the traditional power dynamics of colonialism:

> Despite the insistence that colonialism belongs in the past, the tourism industry has inherited and benefited from the modus operandi of its inequitable predecessor […] Thus tourism risks perpetuating variants of the exploitation and undermining of local communities characteristic of the European colonial occupation (Rushton, 105).

Even as local people benefit to varying degrees by participating in processes of development, the dynamic is frequently exploitative, as the key beneficiaries are corporations.

Strategic Exoticism and the World Literary Marketplace

This chapter is situated at the intersection of world literature, postcolonial studies and Indigenous studies, bringing theoretical frameworks from these fields to bear on two novels and developing these discourses in turn. There are numerous definitions of world literature within the field, from Damrosch's suggestion that world literature is that which circulates beyond its culture or language of origin, to the idea that it is some canon of superior literary works i.e. 'world-class' literature. While traditionally distinct fields with different academic genealogies, a number of recent works have sought to bridge the gap between postcolonial

literature and world literature (Deckard et. al, 2015; Cheah, 2015). James Williams has asserted the need for an emphasis on postcolonialism in world literary discourse, highlighting "the wide and ongoing relevance of postcolonial concerns" in reading texts that "might otherwise fall under the purview of a flourishing and, occasionally, implicitly post-postcolonial model of world literature" (5). Yet world literary studies, like postcolonial studies, has rarely engaged with Native American contexts. This is despite the fact that Native oral literatures have always been 'worldly', having circulated transnationally, and Native written texts have had an increasingly global readership since the mid-twentieth century. Both King and Mda self-reflexively engage with world forms of literature through their uses of intertextuality and adoption of classic world literary genres. Further, they undertake authorial 'performances' that engage with dominant conventions of postcolonial and Indigenous literatures in the world literary marketplace. Formally, the novels have little in common, though both authors employ generic forms that are closely associated with capitalist modernity. King's novel is a linear, first-person Bildungsroman, whereas Mda's is an historical saga that moves between two cross-temporal narratives. Both also employ local storytelling methods specific to the communities in which the novels are set. In *Truth and Bright Water*, this manifests in a formally subversive representation of the oral tradition, whereas the cultural tradition of split-tone amaXhosa singing, practiced by Qukezwa, has been suggested to shape the form of *The Heart of Redness*. J. U. Jacobs argues that Mda's use of two overlapping narratives should be read as the "fictional equivalent of Xhosa overtone singing" (228).

Through their explicit engagement with questions of the combined and uneven nature of capitalist development, both novels are world-literary as defined by the WReC. In their depiction of rural South African and Canadian First Nations communities living in peripheral, postcolonial spaces, these novels suggest the ways in which, "capitalist development does not smooth away but rather *produces* unevenness, systematically and as a matter of course" (Deckard et al., 12). Yet, each underscores the colonial history that has contributed to the contemporary realities of uneven capitalist development, emphasising the inseparability of coloniality from any analysis of capitalist modernity. This particularly pertains to the issue of land ownership and management. In *Truth and Bright Water,* colonialism has ruptured the Blackfoot community's traditional socio-economic structures to the point where they are no longer self-sufficient. Instead, they are dependent on an engagement with the capitalist world-system but are geographically and economically isolated, due to historic and contemporary settler colonial land management policies. In *The Heart of Redness,* the legacies of colonial and apartheid development agendas mean that the rural population of Qolorha do not have access to basic facilities such as electricity and

running water. Historic agendas of underdevelopment therefore contribute to the precarity to which groups are disproportionately exposed in the contemporary moment. These conditions created through entwined colonial and capitalist histories of development serve to intensify a dependency on unreliable and potentially exploitative industries, including tourism.

While uneven development is explored thematically in both novels, it is also formally registered through King and Mda's departures from realist aesthetics. Both texts are commonly framed as 'magic realist', though this is a term that both King and Mda express ambivalence towards.[69] The WReC argue that postcolonial literature of the (semi-)periphery is more likely to be in an "irrealist" mode that registers the "temporal and spatial dislocations and the abrupt juxtapositions of different modes of life engendered by imperial conquest" (Deckard et al., 72). Irrealist aesthetics, the WReC suggest, include features such as "anti-linear plots, meta-narrative devices, unreliable narrators," and multiple and contradictory points of view. The presence of such formal features is attributed to what they observe as a feeling of irreality that manifests with the "compound instability of life experienced in the periphery," as well as authorial engagements with existing "repositories of non-normative or numinous forms of folkloric knowledge, located in alternative cultural archives" (Deckard et al., 76). However, as Sarah Brouillette and David Thomas note, the WReC's argument does not "involve any theory of mediation that would account for the causal relation between literary form, the psychic experience of disjuncture, and the violence of capitalist development" (Harlow et al., 513). As they assert: "One is asked to accept the reflectionist premise that peripheral crises are lived as unreal, the world experienced as somehow unworldly and uncanny, and this lived experience is expressed straightforwardly in literary form". Building on this critique, we can consider how the WReC's analysis fails to account for the role of authorial self-reflexive play or engagement with market trends and reader expectations, such as the convention for Indigenous or postcolonial novels to conform to the genre of magic realism. This is essential to consider in relation to Mda and King's works, which play with and mobilise literary generic conventions and expectations within their writing to subvert ethnographic readings.

[69]In an interview, Zakes Mda contests the category of magic realism, due to its Eurocentric framing. He argues that "the world from which my fiction draws hasn't got that line of demarcation between the supernatural on one hand and what you would call objective reality on the other hand." Instead, in the South African context, the "two merge and live side by side. Those who live in that world can't separate the two. What in the Western world you consider as magic is part of their day-to-day lives, you see, and it is part of their real world. It is part of their realism" (Kachuba, 'An Interview with Zakes Mda'). Numerous Native American authors, including King, have contested the term magic realism for similar reasons.

The question of mediation is crucial. Both Mda and King demonstrate their awareness of their role as authors from recognisable marginalised groups and the expectations of their novels to fulfil certain conventions. As I will argue, one of the primary ways by which they negotiate this is through employing the figure of the Indigenous guide as a literary device. As such, I do not suggest that Mda and King merely reflect the political and socio-economic realities within which they are located. Rather, King's writing (here and across his fiction more broadly) satirises characteristics of Native American literature that have become recognisable by subversively incorporating them into his work and playing with the reader's expectations. The novel teasingly engages with magic realism, making it impossible to tell whether the magic is 'real' in the imagined world of the novel or is an illusion, much like the church that the "famous Indian artist" Monroe Swimmer paints out of existence (King, 129). While Mda has suggested that the presence of magic in his writing is reflective of the lived experience of certain South African communities, he has also commented on the role of intertextuality in his work, expressing that he is influenced by the writing of magic realist authors including Gabriel Garcia Marquez.[70] Highlighting the potential for further examples of influence and exchange, I suggest that Mda adopts Native American signifiers into his text. This act of appropriation suggests that, in the contemporary moment of capitalist globalization, local manifestations of indigeneity cannot be negotiated without the influence of a global Indigenous imaginary.

In *The Postcolonial Exotic,* Huggan suggests that postcolonial authors frequently employ strategic exoticism as a way of challenging these modes of engagement. Huggan defines this as:

> the means by which postcolonial writers/thinkers, working from within exoticist codes of representation, either manage to subvert those codes ('inhabiting them to criticize them', Spivak 1990a), or succeed in redeploying them for the purposes of uncovering differential relations of power (*The Postcolonial Exotic*, 32).

Self-reflexively drawing on recognisable simulations of alterity, King and Mda's writing is part of a broader strategy of resistance employed across postcolonial and Indigenous literatures. Like the authors that Huggan observes, King and Mda are "aware of and resistant to [their] interpellation as marginal spokesperson, institutionalised cultural commentator and representative (iconic) figure". "What is more," Huggan observes, such authors "make their readers aware of the constructedness of such cultural categories" (26). Huggan's work echoes

[70] Mda positions this influence in terms of his and Marquez's shared interest in orature and, specifically, in the oral traditions of African slaves. For further reading, see interview with Kachuba.

that of Anishinaabe scholar Gerald Vizenor, who, writing a decade earlier in 1990, formulated the concept of "postindian warriors" specifically in relation to Native American literary contexts. Vizenor writes that the "simulation of the *Indian* is the absence of real natives" (vii, emphasis in original). Postindian warriors utilise such simulations in order to undermine and surmount the literature of domination (Vizenor, 4). Asserting that "postindian simulations are the core of survivance", Vizenor suggests that the "postindian ousts the inventions with humor, new stories, and the simulations of survivance" (5).[71] Situating this within a longer tradition of Native resistance, Vizenor writes that "postindian warriors encounter their enemies with the same courage in literature that their ancestors once evinced on horses" (4). By situating Native writers within a genealogy of anti-colonial resistance, Vizenor emphasises the political imperative on Indigenous writers to disrupt the narratives perpetuated about Indigenous peoples in the contemporary moment.

Huggan and Vizenor's analysis points towards a shared strategy being employed by Indigenous and postcolonial authors that enables them to subversively engage with exoticised imagery. While writing from clearly distinct contexts and engaging with different forms of erasure and marginalization, both Mda and King employ strategic exoticism in order to challenge the dominant means by which alterity is incorporated into modernity (i.e. commodification). What is particularly interesting is how their engagements with strategic exoticism span cultural and geographical borders. In my analysis of Mda's novel, I expand on Huggan's work to understand the way in which, in the context of a global literary marketplace, strategic exoticism operates across cultural borders. In this, I examine how Mda uses globally recognisable tropes of the ecologically noble Indian to position the Khoisan in a global Indigenous frame of reference. Further, I consider the extent to which King and Mda's use of strategic exoticism provokes us to consider the role of the Indigenous or postcolonial author in perpetuating the dominant conventions of the world literary marketplace, including the reproduction of exoticised narratives as well as conforming to paradigms of accessibility.

If, as I have suggested, the literary and touristic industries perpetuate the idea of privileged access to another culture, then what is the role of the author in enabling or, alternately, resisting this inherently extractive logic? Emily Apter argues that "translation and untranslatability are constitutive of world forms of literature" (42). In *The Heart of Redness* and *Truth and Bright Water* these characteristics are not only discernible but are in fact mobilised to complicate dominant models of literary accessibility. Questions of accessibility – linguistic, cultural and spatial – recur throughout both novels. With them comes a consideration of the

[71] Vizenor's term survivance suggests both the survival of Indigenous cultures and resistance to colonial domination, which he roots in the active telling of Indigenous stories.

ways that contemporary processes of capitalism (of the literary industry, as well as models of development and tourism, for example) replicate the exploitative and uneven power dynamics of colonialism. Both Mda and King employ the trope of the Indigenous (literary) guide to subversive effect. This narrative device, which operates at the level of form and content, enables them to comment on the uneven power dynamics that characterise global contact zones. The figure of the Indigenous guide manifests throughout the novels to facilitate formal processes of linguistic and cultural translation that are constantly being carried out. However, both authors employ this device self-reflexively in a similar manner to Erdrich, in the poem discussed at the start of this chapter.

Through foregrounding processes of translation, Mda ostensibly reinscribes a dynamic of accessibility. Throughout, the narrator incorporates continuous processes of linguistic and cultural translation for the reader. When Camagu meets Qukezwa riding her horse, for example, the narrator observes that "she is carrying an *umrhubhe,* the isiXhosa musical instrument that is made of a wooden bow and a single string. Women play the instrument by stroking and sometimes plucking the string, using their mouths as an acoustic box" (Mda, 151). The use of italics formally registers the Xhosa language as Other, conforming to the English-language publishing convention of using typography to distinguish so-called English words from foreign ones. But by drawing the reader's attention to the Otherness of the word, Mda foregrounds the act of translation that the narrator is performing. The narrator not only linguistically translates Xhosa terms but provides cultural explanations for the English-speaking reader. In this way, Mda marks the novel as a cross-cultural contact zone in which the narrator takes on the role of cultural guide for the non-Xhosa reader. This process of translation perpetuates a dynamic of cultural access that has become an expectation of postcolonial novels. This is achieved formally through the role of the narrator as well as through the character Qukezwa in the contemporary timeline. Qukezwa takes on the role of Indigenous guide for the protagonist Camagu – a position that is inseparable from the historic gendered connotations of this trope.[72]

King takes a playful approach to this figure, through his depiction of the protagonist and narrator, Tecumseh, as well as through his own authorial performances. As with Erdrich's depiction of Mooshum, discussed in the previous chapter, King draws upon the Native tradition of the trickster as a narrative device. The author figures in *Truth and Bright*

[72]The figure of the Indigenous guide that Qukezwa embodies is inherently gendered, evoking sexualised narratives of Indigenous women on the colonial frontier. Samuelson argues that Qukezwa's immaculate conception is in fact a redemptive narrative, which counters the history recalled in the historic timeline of Khoi women bringing shame on the community through their sexual relations with colonial actors. For further reading, see Samuelson's *Remembering the Nation, Dismembering Women.*

Water as a Native guide who is perhaps using their language to mislead the reader. In King's novel, the close first-person narration of King's novel grants the reader with a certain amount of privileged access. The reader sees what Tecumseh sees and, as a result, is given access to a series of 'back stage' occurrences which are off-limit to the tourists at the Indian Days festival. As a strategy, this narrative style enables King to play with literary conventions of accessibility. Tecumseh ostensibly acts as a cultural guide for the reader: a common narrative device in world literary texts, and in Indigenous or postcolonial Bildungsroman specifically. However, it is the globally recognisable nature of this trope that enables King to successfully subvert it, through rejecting the notion of cultural accessibility at the end of the novel. King, then, problematises the notion of a global audience having unrestricted access to a local culture by creating a front stage and back stage dynamic within the novel, only to ultimately 'refuse' access to the reader by failing to translate a key piece of dialogue that appears in Cherokee. Whereas King works to assert formal and thematic barriers between the reader and 'back stage' moments within the text that reaffirm the reader's 'outsider' status, Mda ostensibly gives the reader privileged access. In addition to foregrounding processes of translation, Mda gives the reader access to various back stage, seemingly 'authentic', performances. Yet, as I will examine, these performances are often dependent on the appropriation of global simulations of indigeneity and, as such, work to forestall the very possibility of accessibility that they appear to facilitate.

Such refusals of accessibility should be understood in the context of the uneven power dynamics that underpin the capitalist world-system and its associated industries. Within these industries, Indigenous cultures and territories are, for the most part, expected to be 'open for business'. Yet, while the rest of the world has the privilege to enter Indigenous spaces, Indigenous peoples themselves face significant and systemic barriers to gain access to mainstream society. In *Truth and Bright Water,* King approaches this issue through the image of the uncompleted bridge over the River Shield. As well as symbolising the ever-present national border between the United States and Canada, the bridge manifests the disconnect between Bright Water reserve and the rest of the world, taunting those who cannot cross. It acts as a tangible obstacle, through which King symbolises the exclusionary capacities of the capitalist world-system that are the modern manifestations of colonial histories of spatial segregation. When one teenager from the reserve attempts to cross – and gets stuck in – the frame, the fire department tells the Blackfoot community to, "keep [their] kids on their side of the river" (King, 41). The novel also emphasises the marked difference between rooted Indigenous populations, dependent on the uncertain economy of the tourist industry, and the cosmopolitan, predominantly white, tourists with the "privilege of movement" (Huggan, 207). This familiar dynamic is made more complex because of the

status of the Blackfoot's land as a reserve. Coloniality has forced the Indigenous population into a position where they are dependent on the settler colonial economy for survival. Through targeted acts, such as decimating the buffalo population, Euroamerican settlers destroyed existing sources of subsistence in order to ensure that Indigenous peoples became reliant on the settler colonial market. Yet, existing within the peripheral space of the reserve offers the Blackfoot limited avenues for economic prosperity. This evokes the ways in which capitalism and settler colonialism are co-constitutive, together working to force Indigenous peoples to renounce their sovereignty and/or territories. This dynamic is further emphasised through the character of Monroe Swimmer, who is able to achieve critical and financial success as an artist only after leaving Bright Water to go to Toronto. While the other Blackfoot characters' inability to leave the reserve should not be understood as involuntary, as it is complicated by spiritual, political and legal ties to the land, King does not shy away from detailing the harsh economic reality for those that remain.

Repressive Authenticity and the Discursive Elimination of the Native

Described by *World Literature Today* as one of Canada's "leading public intellectuals and activists", King has a wide readership that spans multiple languages (King, *The Inconvenient Indian,* cover copy). He is the author of almost two-dozen novels, short story collections, and works of non-fiction, many of which have been translated into different languages. In this chapter, I argue that King's thematic engagement with the tourist industry in fact serves to challenge non-Native readers with their own complicity in processes of exotification, through establishing a pervasive association between the reader and the tourists in the novel. As a non-Indigenous scholar, I do not attempt here to provide an account of the varying responses and modes of engagement that Native readers may have with King's text. For this, I would direct readers to scholarship by Native American and First Nations scholars, such as Justice who understands the narrative to have a "profoundly Cherokee sensibility" (*Our Fire Survives the Storm,* 169). Instead, I am seeking to understand how King is engaging with a global readership, while being mindful that this is of course not limited to a single response. The text will resonate differently with Euroamerican readers than it will with readers from other societies, for example, just as there will be varying types of engagement from Native readers, depending on their tribal heritage, cultural and linguistic knowledge, level of community engagement, and a multitude of other factors.

The palimpsestic landscape of the novel exhibits spectral and tangible markers of colonialism that unsettle the touristic landscape of the Canadian prairies. None is more imposing than the ever-present Canada-United States border that divides the community. Yet, while registering its dominance, King's novel suggests the permeability of the national

border. One way that this is achieved is through Native characters that continually cross back and forth in illegitimate ways, such as the "ferry": "an old iron bucket suspended on a cable over the Shield [River]" (King, 42). As Erdrich's *The Plague of Doves* demonstrated the shared struggle of Indigenous peoples in both the United States and Canada through invoking the history of Louis Riel and the failed Métis rebellion, King similarly asserts the shared experiences of Native Americans and First Nations communities. As I argue, this is powerfully evoked through the incorporation of the Cherokee history of Removal and Cherokee characters, who are welcomed into the Blackfoot space. King's attention to the shared experiences of First Nations and Native American peoples is located within a broader gesture across the novel towards a pan-Indian solidarity. This is implicit within the naming of the protagonist, Tecumseh, which is the name of a nineteenth-century Shawnee warrior and chief who became the leader of an anti-colonial, multi-tribe confederacy.[73]

In its depiction of global tourism, and its concomitant fetishization of Indigenous cultures, King's narrative invites readers to consider the narratives that the industry necessarily and violently obfuscates. The character Monroe Swimmer, a relatively successful artist and trickster figure, has been read as a marker for King.[74] Through eccentric efforts to restore the landscape to its pre-colonial state, Swimmer returns buffalo to the prairies (even if they are made of iron) and camouflages landmarks of colonialism such as the church, painting over them until they ostensibly disappear. Such "disappearing acts", as understood by Florian Schwieger, are "rituals of purification and cleansing" (38). Schwieger notes that by "rendering the church and other symbols of white intrusion invisible, Swimmer attempts to purge the homeland from the colonial contamination". Yet, the efficacy of his efforts, described by Jesse Rae Archibald-Barber as "provocative yet facile aesthetic deception[s]", is questionable (240). King's satirical treatment of Swimmer's endeavours reflects an implicit self-reflexive critique within King's own work, casting doubt on his own ability to effect change through creating art. Swimmer is also concerned with exposing colonial histories that have been marginalised. He subversively 'restores' historic works of art in museums by physically adding Indigenous presence – in the form of villages and people – "back into the painting" (King, 133). King's novel, too, is partly an attempt to uncover and reckon with the hidden histories of colonial and capitalist violence on the North American landscape. But, more than this, King's novel is concerned with foregrounding the actual processes of denial themselves and the role that commodification plays in supporting settler colonial strategies

[73] It is not clear whether Tecumseh is the protagonist's real name or a nickname, as it is only referenced once in the novel.

[74] Jesse Rae Archibald-Barber argues that the character of Swimmer is a reflection of King, through his use of a kind of magic that blurs the lines between imagination and reality to "achieve [his] artistic transformations" (240).

of erasure.

Heavily symbolic descriptions of the North American plains reveal an environment in which histories of genocide are barely hidden: "Maybe if you dug down a little in the grass and the clay, you'd find entire tribes scattered across the prairies" (71). While Tecumseh's vision of "entire tribes" evokes a trans-Indigenous understanding of Native suffering that is not rooted within one community, the use of the word "scattered" gestures to histories of forced removals and relocation across North American landscapes.[75] In addition to the physical remnants of colonialism, King is also concerned with what is missing from the land. The buffalo and other wild animals that once roamed the plains repeatedly appear as shapeshifting spectres: "I look back towards Bright Water, but all I can see is the motorcycle. From a distance, you could mistake it for a bear sitting down or an elk kneeling in the grass" (King, 152). In foregrounding the non-human ramifications of colonialism, the narrative moves beyond an anthropocentric focus to demonstrate the indivisibility of human and non-human experiences. Casel Busse has analysed the numerous animal spectres in King's novel, suggesting that "King's animal ghosts contest […] the anthropocentricity of current theoretical understandings of trauma and colonialism" (135). We can extend this focus on the non-human beyond animals to consider the long timescale of environmental degradation that is a consequence of colonialism and which has intensified through neoliberal capitalism. The spectre of uneven capitalist development haunts the geography of the novel, through the frame of the unfinished bridge and conditions of environmental precarity on the reserve, including smoking landfill and the biowaste polluting the Shield river. Yet, it is this haunted landscape that is being repurposed to foster global tourism: an industry that frequently functions through the erasure of the colonial past and present. The predominantly Western tourists, who come from Germany, Japan and across the United States, are implicated in interconnected global histories of exploitation. They ultimately desire a 'pristine' natural environment, even as they contribute to its pollution, as well as a de-politicised, exoticised aesthetic of American Indian culture, removed from historic, as well as ongoing, settler colonial violence. Instead, they seek a reaffirmation of the stereotypical notions of indigeneity, epitomised through the family Tecumseh encounters that "decided to come west this year to find the real Indians": "'All the ones we hear about,' says the woman, 'are in the penitentiary'" (234). In his depiction of global tourism, and its concomitant fetishization of Indigenous cultures, Kings invites readers to consider the narratives that the industry necessarily and violently obfuscates. This is a process in which literature, too, is complicit.

[75] This description of the landscape, and the discovery of a child's skull at the beginning of the novel, foreshadows the arrival of Rebecca Neugen: the Cherokee girl from Georgia, suggested to be spiritual survivor of the Trail of Tears.

Ojibwe author David Treuer makes the observation that, "most readers come to Native literature fully loaded with ideas, images, and notions" (25). Thus, he questions: "How does [the author] escape this all-pervading thing, exoticised foreknowledge?" King, however, avoids this by not attempting to escape such preconceptions. Instead, they are active components of his work, as he utilises stereotypes in order to challenge them. The Blackfoot community of the novel have a complex relationship with global images of indigeneity. Fuelled by the touristic presence, numerous characters in *Truth and Bright Water* perform 'authentic' Indian identities in order to exploit the visitors and benefit financially. Yet, King also depicts Native characters that exhibit cultural longing for an ostensibly lost Indigenous culture and pre-colonial landscape. This speaks to what Anishinaabe scholar Shaawano Chad Uran understands as the way that, following "colonial disruption of education, spirituality, social life, and economy,":

> some people have been left with little more than stereotypes to fill in the missing aspects of their lives. Instead of being raised knowing that Indigenous identity is, first and foremost, a political identity shaped by history, language, and tradition, many of us only know an "Indian" identity based on an aesthetic—a style or fashion (Uran).

Tecumseh and his teenage cousin Lum consciously perform masculine Dead Indian identities, even when removed from the tourist-facing public sphere. An example of this is the scene in which Tecumseh is looking for his dog Soldier: "I begin to imagine that I'm an old time tracker on the trail of game. I take off my shirt and rub dirt on my body to kill my scent and to help me blend in with the landscape, and I get low to the ground and move through the grass as quickly and silently as I can" (King, 195). Through the use of humour, King brings the image back to reality with Tecumseh's quick realization that he is not a skilled tracker and, as such, does not live up to the idealised image of the pre-colonial hunter: "I lose Soldier's trail almost immediately", Tecumseh says (195). Such moments not only serve to disrupt narratives of authenticity, but also emphasise the weight of cultural disconnection as a legacy of colonialism and a desire to reconnect with a heritage, which has been warped by dominant images of Indians in film and literature.

Similarly, after being violently attacked by his father, Tecumseh's cousin Lum adopts the aesthetic of a Dead Indian, epitomising Vizenor's assertion that the 'Indian' is in itself a simulation: "[he] has painted his face. Red on one side. Black on the other […] Lum is naked to the waist. He has a red circle on his waist and black marks on his arms." After taking in his appearance, Tecumseh remarks that, "he looks like the Indians you see at the Saturday

matinee" (225). Taking on the guise of a 'warrior' in his moment of vulnerability, Lum seeks to embody a romanticised simulation of Native masculinity, suggested to be all that is available to him. With the exception of Monroe Swimmer, the novel has a dearth of adult male characters that can act as role models to the teenagers, leaving them with few realistic representations of masculinity to which they can aspire. King's deployment of the Dead Indian figure thus hints at a larger crisis of Indigenous masculinity that is compounded by the proliferation of romanticised imagery in popular media. The novel represents Indigenous male characters as complex and frequently problematic, resisting what Jones describes as the impulse to "always" make Natives "the good guys" ('Letter', xvi). Through depicting characters such as Lum's abusive father and Elvin, Tecumseh's father, who is responsible for the biowaste being dumped in the river, King disrupts the essentialising narrative that equates indigeneity with virtue. As Jones argues: "The cruellest form of essentialism is that which we lay on ourselves […] if we're always the good guys – which in Indian stories often translates to 'victim' […] then we may as well go ahead and sign up to be noble" (xvi). King's representation of Elvin's complicity in environmental degradation specifically subverts the trope of the ecological Indian, which, as I argue in the final section of this chapter, is an archetype that recurs in Mda's novel. This romanticised archetype, created by Euroamerican environmentalists and popularised through American literature and mainstream media, is just one of those that King's novel works to subvert.[76]

At the Indian Days festival, and in the form of the novel itself, King establishes an imagined geography consisting of two layers. This structure exemplifies MacCannell's notion of staged authenticity. In the context of tourism, this refers to the way that communities often create a distinction between a commodified 'front stage' culture and sacred 'back stage' culture, enabling groups to participate in the tourist economy while ensuring that aspects of their culture remain inaccessible (MacCannell, 590). The Indian Days festival is a front stage created by the Blackfoot, in which characters actively participate in their own commodification by performing as Dead Indians. There are clear economic benefits to doing this, which King depicts as the primary motivation for the Blackfoot characters. However, in anthropology, scholars observe that Indigenous activists have replicated symbolic constructs of indigeneity to serve a political function (Conklin, 710).[77] While such

[76] This trope was immortalised in the now-infamous 1971 antilittering commercial by Keep America Beautiful Inc., which featured the non-Native actor Iron-Eyes Cody in the role of 'crying Indian'.

[77] In an analysis of Indigenous activism in Brazil, Conklin observes that "Indigenous images constructed in relation to Western concepts of primitivism, exoticism, and authenticity proved to be strategically effective political tools", when adopted by Indigenous activists. Conklin details cases where Indigenous groups in Brazil successfully adopted visual or other markers of Indigeneity for strategic purposes in order to represent their need for self-determination. For further reading, see Conklin, "Body Paint, Feathers, and VCRs: Aesthetics and Authenticity in Amazonian Activism" (1997).

performances can play into traditional power dynamics, they can also be utilised for the purpose of disruption. Yet, as Conklin notes: "there are contradictions and liabilities in using such symbolic constructs to pursue indigenous goals of self-determination" (710). While, then, we can situate King's use of strategic exoticism in the context of the wider political aims that are at stake, Conklin's words remind us that this process – both in textual and real-world performances – is not unproblematic, as it often ends up reinforcing the very symbols it aims to disrupt.

These questions surrounding the disruptive potential of strategic exoticism arise through a parodic performance in the novel, in which the Blackfoot character Edna interacts with a group of German tourists. Upon seeing them approach, Edna remarks, "Looks like it's time to do some fur trading" (King, 211). Tecumseh narrates what follows:

> Edna has her Indian face on now. She points with her lips and makes elaborate signs like slapping her hands across one another and tracing a circle in the sky with her arm… Edna nods, reaches down, and comes up with a small drum and starts singing a round dance. The German guy is suddenly all smiles and he can't get his hand into his pocket fast enough (King, 211).

In this interaction, Edna adopts the role of a Dead Indian in order to play into to the tourists' romanticised notion of indigeneity and benefit financially. This enables King to offset the power dynamics associated with the tourism industry: where Indigenous peoples are traditionally viewed as occupying a role of victimry. My usage of the term victimry follows Vizenor, who argues that dominant narratives about Indians are characterised by images that position them as tragic victims. Edna's performance as a Dead Indian demonstrates, not only is she fully aware of how Indians are depicted in transnational contexts, but she knows how to utilise this knowledge for material gain. King, therefore, frames Edna as an agent in the process of global tourism and subsequently, she temporarily subverts this imbalance of power.

Instances of staged indigeneity are clearly not new. A seminal example of this is the photography of Edward S. Curtis (1868-1952), which has been derided by scholars for being "more concerned with staging 'authenticity' than representing actual Indigeneity" (Uran). Yet, while simulations of indigeneity originate as an oppressive tool utilised by colonising societies, they can also be co-opted as a means for subversion, as we see here. One could of course question to what extent such a performance is indeed subversive, as any agency is arguably limited if the economic livelihood of the Blackfoot depends on the reiteration of

regressive stereotypes. However, remarking on the power dynamics of cultural performance James C. Scott suggests that it is a mistake to see performances:

> as totally determined from above and to miss the agency of the actor in appropriating the performance for his own ends. What may look from above like the extraction of a required performance can easily look from below like the artful manipulation of deference and flattery to achieve its own ends (34).

Scott's observations were made with regard to instances whereby African American slaves reinforced stereotypes through performance. Yet, extending his analysis to other spaces of cross-cultural encounter, such as tourism, provides a useful lens through which to understand the ways that performances of cultural and racialised stereotypes can subvert traditional power dynamics. Though this subversion is momentary, and ultimately has no lasting effect on the colonial status quo, minor acts of resistance such as this still have power – particularly when shared on an international platform through literature. As a literary construction, Edna's performance enables King to disrupt the myth of authenticity by demonstrating the falsity of simulations of indigeneity. At the narrative level, King leads the reader to believe that we have been granted privileged access to what is ostensibly the back stage – as we are witness to the moments preceding and following this interaction. Through this, King demonstrates the extent to which authentic Indigenous identities are pure constructions.

Butler writes that it is through the "parodic repetition of 'the original,' [that] reveals the original to be nothing other than a parody of the idea of the […] the original" (*Gender Trouble,* 43). In this vein, King parodies the notion of the 'original' Indian to achieve subversive effect. The reference to fur trading, in particular, evokes an archetypal Indian figure from the colonial frontier. Edna's embodied performance of an Indian – largely mute and physically exaggerated, pointing with her lips, with the exoticised prop of a drum – plays into recognisable stereotypes of Indians that have been perpetuated through cultural narratives, from settler literary narratives to Hollywood westerns. Edna's mute engagement with the tourists is characteristic of the Noble Savage figure; silence, as Michael Taylor notes in the context of 'playing Indian', "harkens to 'the stoic' representation of the Indian profile" (4). Edna's overly elaborate actions mimic the exaggerated nature of Indigenous caricatures. While in Native American communities, lip pointing is frequently employed as a mode of physical, rather than verbal, communication, Edna's use of this physical gesture does not

fulfil this function.[78] Rather, it enables her to physically embody what has become, in cultural terms, a recognisably 'Indian' trait. The humorous nature of Edna's performance is crucial in fulfilling a political function. Butler writes that "there is a subversive laughter in the pastiche-effect of parodic practices in which the original, the authentic, and the real are themselves constituted as effects" (*Gender Trouble*, 200). The reader's laughter therefore renders the notion of the original, or authentic, to be nothing more than a construct. King's ability to demonstrate this in a transnational arena – the very space of the novel – serves an essential role in undermining the weight of repressive authenticity, which mainstream cultural narratives continue to perpetuate.

Authorial Performance and the Impossible Back Stage

Rather than merely a thematic trope carried out by certain characters, I argue that performativity, and the concept of staged authenticity, are integral to the form of *Truth and Bright Water*. Considering Sean Kicummah Teuton's suggestion that King's writing intends to "invite reflection on the Indigenous novel and its creation and purposes", I suggest that King draws upon performativity as an essential strategy through which to do this, by self-reflexively 'performing' the role of the Indigenous author within the narrative (330). In doing so, King responds to what Helen Hoy identifies as the "knowable characteristics" that are "expected to inform" Native-authored texts (5). Such pressures, Hoy continues, "exert disturbing force" on Native writers. By alternately incorporating and disrupting knowable characteristics of Indigenous writing – for example the significance of oral storytelling, origin stories, and the trope of the Indigenous guide – King presses the reader to consider how literary production and circulation commoditises and exoticises Indigenous cultures – and what the role of the author is in this process. To explore this, I focus on an ostensible back stage performance that occurs towards the end of the novel, involving Rebecca Neugin: a character who repeatedly appears during the Indian Days Festival. A young Cherokee girl, travelling through the reserve with her family from Georgia to Oklahoma, Rebecca is a spectral survivor of the 1938 Trail of Tears. During the festival, Rebecca meets a group of Blackfoot women, including Tecumseh's grandmother, in a tipi away from the main activities, where she tells them a Cherokee origin story:

> 'Now the rules are,' says Lucille, 'if you're a guest, we have to feed you, and you have to tell us about the Cherokee.'

[78] See Gary Plank's article on non-verbal communication within American Indian groups, with a particular focus on Navajo school children: 'What Silence Means for Educators of American Indian Children'.

> […] 'Do you speak your language?' says Teresa.
> 'Yes, ma'am,' says Rebecca.
> 'Good', says Lucille. 'Then you can tell your story in Cherokee.'
> 'You guys don't speak Cherokee,' I say.
> 'More to a story than just the words,' says my grandmother.'
> … 'Gha! Sge!' says Rebecca, and now her voice sounds better, too. 'Hila hiyuhi u':sgwanighsdi ge:sv:'i…'
> 'Ah,' I hear my grandmother say. 'A creation story. Those ones are my favourite' (King, 220).

This interaction, occurring in the back stage of the festival, initially appears to be more authentic than the performances we have seen occurring in the realm of tourists. In creating this layered geography, King ostensibly satisfies what Huggan observes as the tourist's desire to "go beyond the other 'mere' tourists to a more profound appreciation of society and culture" (Huggan, 194). Like the tourist, the reader shares a desire for access, and King plays into this knowledge. At first glance, we believe him to be rewarding the reader, a literary traveller, with this behind-the-scenes performance of oral storytelling. However, this too is a simulation. The scene is a constructed touristic space, "arranged to produce the impression that a back region has been entered even when this is not the case" (Talcott Parson qtd in MacCannell, 589). Of course, within a novel, there is no back stage; in any literary narrative, there is only a front stage comprising what the author wills the reader to see.

Like Edna, King adopts the role of the trickster, within the narrative. The reader never actually hears the origin story or witnesses the moment of trans-Indigenous exchange that is suggested to occur. King ostensibly fulfils an expectation of Indigenous authors, by interweaving the cultural tradition of oral storytelling with the written form. Yet, readers that do not know Cherokee are prevented from accessing the moment of exchange through multiple scales of removal. The only instance in the book where King does not translate an Indigenous language, the Cherokee serves an important function in establishing a clear boundary. While the physical distance from the rest of the festival ensures that the episode occurs far from the eyes of tourists, the untranslated language ensures – on a formal level - that certain readers remain removed. We can understand this example of linguistic untranslatability as a strategy that allows King to shift the power dynamic in order to render the reader an outsider. In Jones's 'Letter to a Just-Starting-Out Indian Writer', he writes that Native authors should "[u]nderstand that the market, the publishing industry, they're going to want to package you as 'exotic,' as somehow foreign and alien on a continent you didn't need anybody's help finding. Always resist this. Always displace that alienness back onto

them" (xiii). King thus refutes the positioning of Indigenous peoples as exotic and, by using the Cherokee language, formally displaces this onto the (non-Cherokee) reader at a formal level.

Further, through this scene, King subverts the trope of the Indigenous guide that we have become familiar with over the course of the novel. Despite the fact that Tecumseh says the Blackfoot women themselves don't speak Cherokee, they are ostensibly able to communicate with Rebecca. For them, this moment serves as a trans-Indigenous exchange that demonstrates a reciprocity between Native American and First Nations cultures that surpasses linguistic comprehension. Tecumseh, however, along with the reader is excluded from comprehending this moment. Furthermore, shortly after Rebecca begins speaking, Tecumseh physically walks away, removing himself (and the reader) from the encounter: "Through the canvas, I can hear Rebecca's voice. It sounds almost as though she's singing" (220). Teasingly, King suggests that the scene continues but is inaccessible. The physical barrier of the tent wall mimics the language barrier for the non-fluent reader; with Tecumseh we are back on the outside, having "missed a wonderful story" (265). Here King crucially subverts the narrative trope of the Native guide – Tecumseh, our 'insider', is also excluded.

These formal and thematic barriers work to assert the opacity of Indigenous cultures and, crucially, the sovereignty of Indigenous peoples to determine precisely which aspects of their culture are accessible to outsiders or available for commodification. In using the term opacity, I follow Édouard Glissant who uses it to refer to the heterogeneous mix of "irreducible singularity" that is "insistent[ly] presen[t]" within every culture (190). While suggesting that "opacities can coexist and converge", Glissant argues for the "right to opacity", which King here asserts (190). By constructing a barrier of opacity that distances selected readers, King rejects the expectation of transparency implicit within an understanding of world literature as that which provides "windows into foreign worlds" (Damrosch, 15). Traditional understandings of world literature place the global reader into a privileged position of unrestrained access to non-Western cultures, thereby erasing the agency of the individuals belonging to the culture in question. King, however, resists this dynamic and asserts Indigenous agency by constructing a simulated performance of oral storytelling, only to refuse readers from accessing this moment. In the previous chapter I used the term narrative refusal to understand how Erdrich and Wicomb employ this as a narrative strategy in the context of a politics of recognition and national memory cultures. Here, King similarly enacts a narrative refusal, but in response to the context of commodity culture within capitalist modernity. As such, the emphasis is less on *national memory* cultures, speaking more to a *global consumer* culture. King's act of narrative refusal carries particular weight when considered in relation to North American histories of the attempted erasure of

Indigenous languages. Such histories formed an integral part of the cultural genocide enacted by settler states, where policies continued until the late twentieth century across the United States and Canada.

In enacting this narrative refusal, King rejects the imperative of what Laguna Pueblo writer Paula Gunn Allen ascribes to the "white world", where information is "to be saved and analysed at all costs" (383). For Allen, Native ethical practice sits directly in opposition to a logic of global capitalist entitlement that animates the notion that cultural products should enable unrestricted access to (even sacred) cultural knowledge and traditions. This sentiment is echoed by Emily Apter in her criticism of world literature's "entrepreneurial, bulimic drive to anthologize and curricularize the world's resources" (3). It is this established convention that King is disrupting. The use of untranslated Cherokee enables King to resist the processes by which tales of cultural Otherness are incorporated into the global imaginary. To read this within the context of world literary discourse, then, King is self-reflexively playing with the expectations that global readers have of world literature. Pheng Cheah suggests that "literature's purpose is to ameliorate the evanescence of human life by making a mark in collective memory" (*What is a World?,* 250). In Cheah's rendering, world literature takes on the role of testimony and, accordingly, it is implied that it carries with it some kind of authenticity or truth. King, however, pointedly disrupts this paradigm. By foregrounding the various processes of performance and mediation that occur in any arena of cross-cultural contact, he resists the notion that literature can be read as cultural artefact. Instead, King employs the communicative power of literature in order to render visible the constructed nature of narratives of authenticity and pose the question of who has the right to access another person's culture: forcing the reader to consider the role of literature, and the author in this process.

South African Indigeneities and Textured Postcoloniality in *The Heart of Redness*

Mda's *The Heart of Redness,* much like Wicomb's *David's Story*, considers the post-apartheid future through looking to the past. An historic narrative that is interspersed with the novel's contemporary timeline enables the author to revisit originary forms of colonialism to draw parallels with the present. Rather than focusing on the history of apartheid (obliquely referred to in the novel as the "Middle Generations"), Mda re-examines the mid-nineteenth century Xhosa wars with the British to consider South Africa's contemporary position in a transnational arena (73). The novel frames the issue of global interest in South Africa, specifically in relation to questions of touristic development and environmental protection, as a key site for the negotiation of enduring colonial legacies and neocolonialism. Of paramount significance is the legacy of the narrative of colonialism as a 'civilising mission',

which shapes development discourse in both the historic and contemporary timelines, in terms of a teleological narrative of progress. While in the historic timeline, colonialism is articulated by the British and selected Xhosa supporters as a necessary means to civilization, in the contemporary narrative the development of a large-scale tourist resort is similarly registered as offering the possibility of bringing progress to the "wild coast" (184).

Mda portrays how a colonial logic of progress has been internalised by the Unbelievers of Qolorha as well as the ANC government that is pushing the development agenda as a project of "national importance" (200). Through a satirical narrative, Mda critiques how ostensibly post-colonial societies continue to be shaped by enduring colonial epistemologies. By tracing the discursive and ideological points of overlap across the two timelines, Mda foregrounds the colonial logic of contemporary international development, suggesting that modern day forms of colonialism are inherently wrapped up in international capital and are frequently perpetuated by the nation state itself. Implicit within Mda's criticism of the ANC's post-apartheid neoliberal agenda, is a critique of the government's failure to address epistemic decolonization in their formal decolonial project. Mda therefore situates the community's engagement with global development in the context of a complex relationship with the nation-state, in which there are constant struggles for sovereignty. Mda's satire suggests that the contemporary moment is one shaped by the uneven distribution of privilege among South Africa's formerly colonised inhabitants, paying particular attention to the conditions faced by rural communities. The post-apartheid South African government of Mda's novel manifests the "heinous cronyism or theft capitalism of the native elite" that Cheah argues is typical of post-independence African states (*Spectral Nationality*, 351). For, although the community of Qolorha-by-Sea ostensibly has a say over whether the resort is built, they ultimately realise that the ruling elite are committed to developing Qolorha into a "tourist heaven", whether or not it has the support of the local community (198-200). The proposed project has divided the community, though it is supported by the Unbelievers who "stand for progress" (92). Such a development, they argue, would allow them to be "rid of this bush which is a sign of our uncivilised state" and "will bring modernity to our lives, and will rid us of our redness".

'Redness' here refers to the red ochre that the Xhosa use to colour their clothing and skin in traditional rituals. Yet, it is frequently used pejoratively to refer to "the red people who have not yet seen the light of civilisation" (261). The association of redness throughout the novel with the 'primitive' calls to mind the use of "red" in the North American context: a label associated with historic racial terms for Native Americans and contemporary slurs,

but one that has been reclaimed by activists since the mid-twentieth century.[79] Considering Mda's treatment of indigeneity alongside King, I suggest we can trace the reverberations of the colour red from a Native American context to understand its significance within a global Indigenous imaginary. This allows us to consider the muted resonance of Native American motifs within South Africa specifically, which – as we will see - becomes more apparent through Mda's engagement with the trope of the ecologically noble Indian. This transference is made possible through the novel itself as a site of global, cross-cultural contact, as it both draws on and transforms tropes and histories from distinct settler colonial spaces.

The uneven distribution of privilege and precarity come together in particularly complex ways when we consider the question of indigeneity in post-apartheid South Africa. Here, I am interested in how the novel negotiates an understanding of indigeneity that is complicated by different claims to belonging, paradigms of ethnicity and gender, as well as conceptualizations of the rural and local vs. the urban and global. Anthony Vital argues that Mda takes a nuanced approach to indigeneity, "simultaneously asserting its value and opening it to question" (307). Through the portrayal of the Khoisan and Xhosa cultural traditions and epistemologies, the novel suggests that Indigenous cultures can meaningfully contribute to contemporary debates pertaining to the environment, as well as offer those displaced by colonialism the opportunity for reconnection. Yet, as Vital suggests, while the local or indigenous is shown to "counter the effects of modern displacement", Mda also "marks the indigenous as problematic, raising questions of who belongs, how one belongs and whether the culture through which one effects a sense of belonging can be considered as having a clear identity" (307). While in agreement with this assertion, I find it necessary to complicate Vital's analysis through an examination of the different facets of indigeneity that the novel presents. Vital doesn't define his understanding of indigeneity and, subsequently, his analysis tends to conflate the 'local' with the 'indigenous', without attending to the different valences of indigeneity that circulate within the novel.

The Heart of Redness attests to the complex political discourse surrounding the notion of indigeneity within South Africa. As Vital observes, the novel "exhibits a postmodern interest in unsettling notions of culture as stable and unified" that, as a narrative strategy, coheres with South African attempts "to move beyond both the animosities associated with colonial settlement and an ethnocentrist politics that could threaten multicultural

[79] The use of "red" to describe Indigenous peoples in North America is considered derogatory, but the term has been reclaimed to a certain extent by Native American political and activist groups – most notably by the pan-Indian Red Power Movement of the 1960-70s. This reclamation of "redness" has found its way into physical expressions of anti-colonial resistance across global settler colonial spaces. For a discussion of the anti-colonial history of red paint see: 'Red Paint: Transnational Movements of Deconstructing, Decolonizing, and Defacing Colonial Structures' (Garsha, 2019).

democracy" (Vital, 306). This reading allows us to specifically understand the recuperative, rather than exclusionary, model of indigeneity that I argue Mda produces within the novel. The dialogic narrative facilitates the vocalization of different claims of belonging within a South African context, including those presented by Khoikhoi, abaThwa (or San), amaXhosa, British and Afrikaner communities. I argue that this should be read as a move towards an "open-ended Indigeneity", an approach that Boehmer attributes to Nelson Mandela's stance during the transition era. Reflecting on Mandela's willingness to work with the Afrikaners during this period, Boehmer writes that Mandela advocated a "shift from an exclusive to an inclusive nationalism, a closed to an open-ended indigeneity […] based in what he would call an essentially African humanism" (270). This approach, Boehmer suggests, did not attempt to deny Afrikaner claims of indigeneity, but instead created space for them within the post-apartheid national narrative.

Following this logic, *The Heart of Redness* creates space for contesting claims of indigeneity to co-exist, even those voiced by descendants of colonial settlers. In the contemporary narrative, this is productively explored through the character John Dalton, whose ancestor was a British colonial military figure. Yet, Dalton's claims to belonging in South Africa – "This is my land. I belong here. It is the land of my forefathers" – are echoed by the Xhosa community in Qolorha (67). Having undergone the traditional Xhosa circumcision ritual and a fluent speaker of the language, Dalton is recognised by the villagers as "only white outside".[80] Similarly, Mda's "open-ended" indigeneity also acknowledges the Afrikaner's claim to be recognised as Indigenous. Speaking to a group of white emigrants planning to leave due to the political changes in South Africa, John Dalton argues that the Afrikaner: "belongs to the soil. He is of Africa. Even if he is not happy about the present situation he will not go anywhere. He cannot go anywhere" (Mda, 139). Dalton's framing of the Afrikaner as belonging "to the soil […] of Africa" echoes the rhetoric of Afrikaner nationalism that sought to establish Afrikaners as "God's people" and the "true inheritors" of the land (Boehmer, 260).[81] The novel reflects an open-ended model of indigeneity, then,

[80] It is important to note that such expressions of belonging do not obscure the enduring uneven power dynamics between Dalton and the rest of the community. As owner of the Blue Flamingo hotel, Dalton is one of the few beneficiaries of the existing tourist industry in the area. Encouraging tourists to participate in the spectacle of Xhosa culture, his ventures are reliant on the commodified performances of indigeneity that he pays women, such as NoManage and NoVangeli, to enact. Further, due to his wealth and his status as a white business owner, he is untouched by the concerns that plague the rest of the community: in his beach-front cottage, he has electricity and running water to which the rest of the village does not have access.

[81] As Elleke Boehmer observes, the Afrikaner national mythology "made up in terms of spiritual connection what they might lack in terms of umbilical cord and blood. Hence […] when they named themselves as a nation, they were happy to name themselves as *Afrika*ner – people of Africa, of this Earth". Yet, as Boehmer notes, this Afrikaner claim to "native-ness" over settlerhood that manifested as "the grand-scale, choreographed performances of Afrikaner indigeneity", resulting in the repressive violence of apartheid (260).

in the inclusion of Afrikaner and British, as well as Xhosa, abaThwa, and Khoikhoi narratives of belonging. Mda therefore allows for different claims to belonging to circulate, without negating material colonial legacies and the accordant levels of privilege or, alternately, precarity faced by certain groups. The novel's approach then broadly corresponds with the ANC's position during the transition, which emphasised a recuperative model of nation-building rooted in multiculturalism. However, in the representation of Khoisan characters, I suggest that Mda departs from this line, by intervening into contemporaneous political debates around Khoisan claims to indigeneity. As such, Mda's novel attempts to facilitate an open-ended indigeneity while recognising the 'earlier' indigeneity of the Khoisan. I suggest that Mda does this through adopting ethnocentric language and globally recognisable symbols of indigeneity.

This narrative framing reflects real-world attempts by the Khoisan to position themselves in relation to the global Indigenous rights movement. While the Khoisan, along with the Griqua, were categorised as coloured under apartheid, post-1994 certain groups began to reject this racially-determined mode of identification to instead assert their cultural heritage. This movement was situated within a political moment that many felt excluded South African groups outside of the so-called 'Bantu' majority, particularly through the failure of the 1996 constitution to address Indigenous rights. As Erwin Schweitzer observes, from the 1990s onwards, "Griqua and other people previously classified as Coloureds began to re-emphasise their Khoekhoe and San heritage, indigeneity, and Africanness" (135). Schweitzer traces how Khoi-San and Griqua activists and organizations asserted their primacy to claim an Indigenous First Nations status. This was largely inspired by the international Indigenous rights movement, in which they gradually became involved (E. Schweitzer, 136-9). While Mda's engagement with genealogy and the historical marriages between Xhosa and Khoi characters ostensibly serves to destabilise any firm boundaries based on racial or ethnic difference, the novel does nevertheless highlight the varying scales of marginalization and exploitation faced by Indigenous South African groups. In the contemporary timeline, the novel depicts the 'borrowing' of cultural traditions, such as the Unbelievers adoption of the abaThwa's memory ritual. As the abaThwa demand that the Unbelievers 'give back' the ancient ritual, Mda complicates the question of cultural appropriation and the uneven power dynamics involved at local levels. While the novel, then, destabilises notions of primacy that continue to drive division in South Africa, it also emphasises the need to attend to the ways in which oppressed populations can oppress others, and the uneven levels of marginalization that affect minority groups. This conflict

between different ethno-cultural groups is suggested to have been ongoing since the colonial contact zone, which, following Mary Louise Pratt, forcibly brought distinct groups into closer contact with one another.[82] In the historic timeline, this debate manifests within the context of the colonial contact zone, as the Xhosa character Twin-Twin refers to the original Qukezwa as a "terrible foreigner". Yet, his brother Twin argues that, as a Khoi woman, she is "not a foreigner. She is the original owner of this land" (Mda, 108).

Through the representation of agentic Khoisan peoples and the recovery of their traditional epistemologies, Mda disrupts a narrow post-apartheid Xhosa ethnic nationalism. There is a brief inclusion of the San, referred to as the abaThwa in the novel, though there is more sustained engagement with characters of Khoi heritage – the two Qukezwas (both in the contemporary and historic narrative), and the Believer patriarch Zim. The presence of Khoi and abaThwa characters – and their continuing cultural practices and epistemologies – refutes the rhetoric, originating during the colonial era, that the Khoisan were left "virtually extinct" following colonization (Lee, 82). This narrative, weaponised by the colonising forces to justify their colonial ideology of terra nullius (meaning 'empty land'), enabled further access to territory and pervades to this day. Yet, the novel also highlights the distinctiveness of Khoi and San cultures, a move that is particularly discernible through the act of naming. The narrator names the San as the abaThwa, informing the reader that they "were disparagingly called the San by the Khoikhoi because to the Khoikhoi everyone who was a wanderer and didn't have cattle was a San" (73).[83] Through this aside, Mda incorporates and intervenes into contemporary political discourse of the Indigenous rights movement, as well as creates a clear distinction between the Khoi and San – whose distinct cultures are, in mainstream discourse, merged together in the singular pronoun Khoisan.

If, as I have argued, *Truth and Bright Water* foregrounds a trans-Indigenous understanding of settler colonial violence, through demonstrating points of connection and exchange between Cherokee and Blackfoot colonial experiences, *The Heart of Redness* expands upon this by framing settler colonialism at simultaneously *local* and *global* scales. While demonstrating an awareness of national conversations around Indigenous rights movements,

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[82] The novel's depiction of the colonial contact zone is suggested to not just have brought colonisers into contact with African populations, but – due to the increasing territorial encroachment that came with British and Dutch expansion – the Xhosa have been brought into closer relation with Khoikhoi. As understood by Pratt, the contact zone invokes the "spatial and temporal copresence of subjects previously separated by geographic and historical disjunctures, and whose trajectories now intersect". (Pratt, 6-7).

[83] While predominantly referred to as San peoples in mainstream discourse, the word 'San' originates from the Khoikhoi language, meaning 'outsider', and is considered derogatory. AbaThwa, on the other hand, is the word the San traditionally used to describe themselves and so has been recovered by abaThwa activist groups and asserted as the preferred pronoun. By referring to them as such in the novel, Mda registers an awareness of this conversation and the ongoing Indigenous rights movement in South Africa.

Mda's implementation of an open-ended indigeneity occurs at a local scale. Within the particular geography of the Eastern Cape, Mda's narrative suggests that Xhosa and Khoisan experiences of colonial violence and expressions of resistance are always intertwined. But, on a larger scale, they are also implicated within a web of global settler colonialism. Through the repeated evocation of the interconnected experiences of British settler colonialism in the historic narrative, South African experiences of colonization are implicated with British imperial domination elsewhere in the world. Sir George Grey, a British historical figure who was Governor of South Australia and New Zealand prior to becoming Governor of the Cape Colony, replicates strategies of settler colonialism in distinct global spaces. In this way, empire is registered as the originary form of globalization. The character Grey himself repeatedly likens the Xhosa to the colonised Indigenous people of the other British colonies, recounting stories of Australia, "where he had succeeded in imposing English law in the place of the bloodthirsty aboriginal law" (156). Yet, the understanding of a shared experience is not only articulated by the colonial forces. Rather, it is voiced by the Xhosa in the historic timeline. Twin-Twin, for example, claims that: "[j]ust as [Grey] stole the land of the people of countries across the seas, he stole the land of the amaXhosa" (96). Therefore, while the Xhosa are not necessarily framed as Indigenous in the *same* way as the Khoisan, Mda does position them within a shared frame of global settler colonial violence. By aligning the Xhosa with Maori and Aboriginal populations of Australia and New Zealand, Mda connects the experiences of the Xhosa with other Indigenous peoples dispossessed through the British settler colonial project.

"A black tourist!" and the Uneven Logic of Touristic Development

I now return to the theme of tourism, which, as with King, provides Mda with an avenue through which to negotiate issues of commodification and exoticization. Much of the contemporary narrative is preoccupied with conflicting perspectives on which models of tourism would be most beneficial to the local community, who are divided on the issue. While the Unbelievers support the development of a large-scale tourist resort and casino, the Believers reject this proposal due to the fact that it would destroy the local ecosystem and threaten existing ways of life. Swayed by the prospect of "wonderful things" that the development of a resort would bring, much of the community fails to realise that the resources would likely only benefit the tourists. The proposed development amounts to a privatization of the commons: a process that would result in the exclusion of those who rely on the sustenance of the landscape, while reserving access to a privileged minority of the

global population who can pay.[84] The character Qukezwa is critical for articulating the argument against building the casino and holiday resort, predicting the expropriation of resources that would follow: "This whole sea will belong to tourists and their boats and their water sports. Those women will no longer harvest the sea for their own food" (Mda, 103). Cognizant that the locals would be financially excluded from such facilities, whilst being disproportionately exposed to the effects of ecological degradation, Qukezwa plays an integral role in helping to shape Camagu's (ultimately successful) proposal of an alternative touristic model. While still relying on a capitalist use of the land, this centres around the protection of the local ecosystem and way of life. This is brought about in the resolution of the novel, as Qolorha is registered as a protected national heritage site, due to its association with the Xhosa prophetess Nongqawuse and the eighteenth-century Xhosa cattle-killings.

Camagu's model of tourism is also positioned in opposition to that being promoted by John Dalton: the local business owner and descendant of a British colonial figure with the same name. Dalton's existing tourist business relies on the commodified performance of Xhosa culture by local residents. He too opposes the development of a casino and resort, instead advocating for the creation of a "cultural village" which will ostensibly enable tourists to "learn how the amaXhosa of the wild coast live" (247). Camagu, however, opposes this for the way in which it perpetuates an exoticised simulation of Xhosa culture, rather than "a true picture of how the amaXhosa live" (285): "It's too contrived", observes Camagu. By using the narrative as a space to stage such debates around different types of tourism, I suggest that Mda hints at the performative nature of the postcolonial novel itself. Mda's novel is a satire and, though deeply influenced by an historical narrative, also incorporates 'contrived' elements that facilitate reflection on the ways in which the novel intervenes into debates around cultural authenticity.

In similar ways to *Truth and Bright Water*, Mda's novel uses the protagonist to play with intersecting scales of insider/outsider status. By complicating this binary, the novel foregrounds the textured postcoloniality of South Africa, raising questions of cultural and spatial disconnection that are legacies of colonialism and apartheid. In *Truth and Bright Water,* Tecumseh is a character whose relationship to his own Blackfoot culture is constantly being negotiated through performance. These performances foreground the extent to which the disruption of cultural practices through colonialism, as well as the circulation of commercial narratives of Indians, have served to unsettle the ways in which Indigenous peoples relate to

[84] In using 'the commons' as a term I follow Marxist scholars including Silvia Federici to refer to communal properties and relations that are not privatised. Here, this specifically refers to the land, water, air and other non-human entities that the community in Qolorha have depended upon for sustenance for centuries.

their culture. The protagonist of *The Heart of Redness*, Camagu, occupies a similarly liminal position within the narrative, occupying a border-crossing status as he embodies the figure of the postcolonial intellectual.[85] Simultaneously an insider and outsider, Camagu is, in his own words, "a tourist from Johannesburg" (60). This very notion warrants a surprised response from the local elders: "'A black tourist!' exclaims the aged one. 'We only see white tourists here.'" (60-61). Scholars including Samuelson, Brouillette and Graham have read Camagu for his resemblances to the author, pointing to their shared backgrounds in cultural development, American education and even their shared cultural heritage.[86] Graham reads Camagu "as a mouthpiece for the author's own views on development issues", a position that Brouillette shares in her analysis of the novel (S. Graham, 206). I acknowledge these points of overlap and am largely in agreement that Mda uses Camagu to advocate for a more ethical model of development. However, I would argue that Mda is not unaware of the irony at work in his characterization. Indeed, by drawing out implicit criticisms of Camagu within the text, Mda undertakes a process of self-reflection that enables him to consider his own role as a representative South African author and the processes of strategic exoticism upon which his novel relies. This logic informs my approach in final section, as I consider the figure of Qukezwa, specifically through the exoticised discourse that characterises her representation.

Though Camagu is not a part of the privileged black South African elite in Johannesburg, neither does he experience the same conditions of precarity as the Qolorha community. Born in a rural village not dissimilar to Qolorha, his Otherness is marked through his urban upbringing in Johannesburg (following forcible relocation), his Western education, and time spent during exile in the United States. He belongs to the amaMpondomise (a distinct Xhosa clan) but has an American education and experience working with international NGOs. Thus, the novel traces the ways in which colonialism and apartheid have together dislocated Camagu – something that his relocation to Qolorha ostensibly offers to rectify. This creates a productive tension within the novel that allows Mda to reflect, not only on the enduring cultural and spatial legacies of colonialism for individuals, but how such legacies complicate the way in which traditional cultures are appropriated and exoticised at multiple scales. The duality that Camagu embodies is ultimately celebrated as beneficial for the local community, reinforcing what Smith observes

[85] Linda Tuhiwai Smith argues that the 'native' intellectual, as discussed in detail by Fanon in the context of twentieth-century liberation movements, has been reformulated to the 'postcolonial' intellectual. Smith discusses the ambivalence that Indigenous communities frequently have towards postcolonial intellectuals, who are alternately criticised for being "distanced from the people" or idealised as saviours due to their Western education (Smith, 70-72). In his encounters with the community of Qolorha, Camagu embodies this tension in Mda's novel.

[86] For further reading, see Samuelson (2007), Graham (2009) and Brouillette (2019).

as a common idealization of postcolonial intellectuals as a "saviours of the people" (70). For, it is Camagu's Westernised outlook and privileged status that permits him to resolve the conflict over the controversial resort, as his alternative is dependent on a sceptical awareness of the rising consumer demand for ethical tourism.

I argue that Camagu's status as both insider and outsider serves two functions within the narrative. First, it enables Mda to play with literary dynamics of accessibility, in a similar way to that we see with King. Secondly, Mda complicates the issue of fetishization, by critiquing the processes of exotification that occur within and across postcolonial/ marginalised cultures. Following Camagu in the contemporary timeline, the reader is privy to the spaces to which he gains access, as someone that is comparatively accepted within the community. This status allows Camagu to go beyond the façade on display for the "gullible tourists" and engage with the local community at a more 'authentic' level. Yet, crucially this does not mean that he does not participate in the same processes of exotification that the Western tourists do. The foreign tourists typically are provided with 'front stage' performances of 'authentic' Xhosa culture. The characters NoManage and NoVangeli are described by Xoliswa Ximiya as two "con artists", who make a living by "milking gullible tourists with their displays and performances of isiXhosa culture" (96). Camagu observes how the women's performance is not rooted in reality but is largely instead based upon "an imaginary past": an aestheticised and decontextualised simulation of a pre-colonial Xhosa culture and landscape (248). Such performances serve to fulfil the tourist's preconceived notions, which are often at odds with the reality of cultural traditions. Much like Edna in *Truth and Bright Water*, Mda's depiction of NoManage and NoVangeli as trickster figures rejects a colonial narrative of victimry without idealising the notion of agency within the capitalist system. Mda is attuned to the continuing power imbalances (particularly around the role played by John Dalton as the entrepreneur facilitating this mode of tourism) but affirms the agency of the Xhosa women to utilise Western, exoticised narratives for their own benefit. In doing so, Mda destabilises the persisting narrative of a local vs. global binary, which frames local, postcolonial populations as somehow removed from global forces of influence. Instead, the residents of Qolorha are already global subjects, aware of their cultural value to Western tourists as the 'exotic' Other: a performance that relies on their denial of this fact. As Camagu observes:

> NoManage pretends she is a traditional healer, what the tourists call a witch doctor, and performs magic rites of her own concoction […] After this the tourists try their hand at grinding mielies or sorghum on a grinding stone or crushing maize into samp with a granite or wooden pestle. All these shenanigans are performed by these

> women in their full isiXhosa traditional costume of the amahomba, which is cumbersome to work in. Such costume is meant to be worn only on special occasions when people want to look smart… not when they are toiling and sweating. And the tourists pay good money for all this foolery! (Mda, 161).

With Camagu as the narrative focaliser, the reader is made aware of the constructed nature of these performances. Interwoven within the description of NoManage and NoVangeli's actions are continuous acts of cultural translation and explanation ("[s]uch costume is meant to be worn on special occasions"). These asides produce the impression that the reader is being provided with a more authentic understanding of Xhosa culture than the tourists who witness such performances.

This illusion of reader access is further developed as Camagu is permitted entry to sacred rituals within the local community. When he visits the home of Bhonco, the patriarch of the Unbelievers, he is invited to watch the elders participate in a dance. The dance places them into a trance that takes them "back to the past. To the world of the ancestors" (73). Through this ritual borrowed from the abaThwa (San), the Unbelievers invoke the grief of past suffering to be more appreciative of the contemporary moment (74). Bhonco's wife NoPetticoat tells Camagu: "It was invented by the Unbelievers of today. When the sad times passed and the trials of the Middle Generations were over, it became necessary to create something that would make them appreciate this new happiness of the new age" (73). The inclusion of this dance plays with the notion of authenticity. For, while it may appear as if Camagu – and the reader – have been permitted access to an 'authentic' cultural experience, by framing the ritual as a new development, one borrowed from a distinct African culture, Mda suggestively evokes the 'inauthenticity' of this act. In doing so, Mda attests to the dynamic nature of Xhosa traditions by refuting the notion of cultural purity, suggesting that no culture exists in isolation. Rather, all cultures are dynamic, continuously developing new practices and borrowing from others.

More broadly, episodes such as this characterise the relationship that Camagu has with the community, allowing Mda to explore the complicated dynamics of exoticization that are at work within cross-cultural encounters. As a privileged visitor, Camagu is allowed to access the back-stage spaces normally off-limits to tourists. Yet, Camagu still registers this dance as exotic, observing the way in which the elders "present a wonderful spectacle of suffering" (74). By framing the ritual as such, Mda highlights the process of exoticism at work within this encounter. As Brouillette notes, exoticism "is a willful activity in which the 'beholder' is the major participant" (*Postcolonial Writers,* 16). Describing the ritual as a "spectacle", Mda's language frames it in terms of its value for Camagu, as the beholder, rather

than its purpose for the Unbelievers. This episode speaks to the complex ways in which Camagu feels an affinity towards the Qolorha community, yet his interactions with them take place through a process of exoticization. Thus while Mda's narrative largely rejects "as crassly touristic any kind of participation in exoticization", this stance is complicated through Camagu's own position as a 'different kind' of tourist, who nevertheless reproduces an exoticised gaze (Brouillette, *UNESCO,* 157). Camagu's interactions with Qukezwa exemplify this gaze, as he valorises her ability to provide him with access to a cultural heritage from which he feels disconnected. Accordingly, the novel problematises the conventional postcolonial framing that critiques the Western commodification and exotification of the Other, without attending to the ways in which postcolonial subjects themselves participate in this process. This not only pertains to self-exoticization, as we see in King's text, but also the transferred exoticization of other postcolonial subjects. As we can see through Camagu's treatment of Qukezwa, this is a process that is always gendered.

There is, then, a tension within the novel, as Camagu is vehemently opposed to fetishised cultural simulations, claiming that such performances devalue contemporary Xhosa culture. Yet, this does not prevent him from participating in a fetishization of 'redness'. This occurs in a way that is less immediately obvious than the behaviour of the Western tourists, but it nevertheless informs his paternalistic role within the community. When witnessing a group of men laughing at a television show in a bar, he "wonders how they are able to follow the dialogue, which is all in English" (143). Despite the fact that they "follow and understand every detail of the story", he does not conceive that the group of rural Xhosa men might be able to understand the language. Instead, he recalls his own experience of childhood, watching the films of "Roy Rogers and Tex Ritter" laughing along with friends, "although none of them knew any English". This leads him to rationalise that the men also must not be able to understand what they are laughing at. By refusing to entertain the idea that the Xhosa men can understand English, as a global language, Camagu situates them outside of global modernity thereby reinscribing the local/global boundary that the novel itself is at pains to disrupt.

Eco-Warriors and Wild Women: Transcultural Modes of Strategic Exoticism

In this final section, I turn to the character of Qukezwa in the contemporary narrative. In doing so, I return to my earlier discussion of indigeneity, which I place in dialogue with the questions of exoticization with which the novel engages. I argue that Mda performs a transcultural mode of strategic exoticism by depicting the Khoi through appropriating a global archetype of indigeneity. Qukezwa has been praised by numerous critics as a female character that champions ecological conservation and custodianship based on Indigenous

epistemologies. Indeed, she is the central figure in the novel calling for the safeguarding of Qolorha's environment. Harry Sewlall even posits that Qukezwa should be read as, "the quintessential ecofeminist", observing that: "Qukezwa's actions register a strong message to those governments which exploit Planet Earth without regard for the deleterious consequences of their actions" (374). As a figure of anti-capitalist resistance, Qukezwa's gender is pertinent. By creating parallels between Qukezwa in the contemporary timeline and her Khoi ancestor of the same name, the novel situates both characters within the context of what Silvia Federici observes as a longstanding socio-political tradition of women opposing the privatization of nature to advocate for more communal modes of living.[87] Depicted to be more ecologically knowledgeable than any other character, Qukezwa is driven by a sense of custodianship over the non-human environment that is rooted in enduring pre-colonial epistemologies. Her ecological knowledge is, I suggest, crucially framed in relation to her Khoi heritage and ethnicity. Her Khoi grandmother is understood to be "the original owner of this land" and the young Qukezwa has, it is implied, inherited this position and the knowledge that goes with it (Mda, 124). She has a superior knowledge of the plants and sea, evoked through numerous instances that suggest an innate ability to understand the environment: "'When the moon is red,' she explained, 'or is dying, with only a small piece remaining, then we know that the next morning will be good for harvesting the sea.'" (138). Further, her character plays an integral role in the novel as an interlocutor and teacher for Camagu.

However, scholars including Vital and Samuelson have critiqued as gendered and racialised elements of Qukezwa's portrayal that, at times, borders on ethnocentrism. Despite the fact that she is "still a child. Young enough to be [Camagu's] daughter", the language used to describe her is heavily sexualised and rooted in a perceived physical difference stemming from her Khoi ancestry (58). Throughout the novel there are repeated references to her "yellow-colored" skin (37), "high cheekbones of the Khoikhoi" and "yellow thighs" (58). Though Qukezwa is of mixed Khoi and Xhosa ancestry, as Samuelson notes, her "body is marked by her Khoikhoi heritage" (*Remembering the Nation,* 67). Connectedly, Vital observes Mda's problematic association of the "pre-modern" with erotic desire in the context of Qukezwa. He highlights an inherent contradiction in the novel, arguing that as "a consequence of [the] valorising of traditional visionary relations with nature, the novel

[87] Federici traces this tradition from Indigenous women's resistance to Spanish colonial domination of the Americas to the contemporary moment, when "in the face of a new process of Primitive Accumulation, women are the main social force standing in the way of a complete commercialization of nature, supporting a non-capitalist use of land and a subsistence-oriented agriculture" ('Feminism and the Politics of the Commons').

approaches a sort of ethnocentrism that much of the narrative appears to be at pains to undermine" (310).

Despite Mda's work throughout the novel to delegitimise repressive narratives of authenticity and to disrupt the trope of the postcolonial exotic, his depiction of Qukezwa – as the primary representative Khoi character in the novel – echoes a familiar exoticised rhetoric of indigeneity. In addition to being framed in a distinctly gendered role as the carrier of (both Xhosa and Khoi) cultural traditions, Qukezwa's characterization relies on a racialised embodiment of indigeneity that is inherently associated with ecological conservation. In contrast to Mda's work throughout the novel to reveal processes of exoticization and deconstruct concomitant notions of postcolonial or Indigenous authenticity, his depiction of Qukezwa ostensibly reaffirms this narrative. Yet, I contend that this contradiction within the narrative is mobilised by Mda to invite reflection on the complexities associated with postcolonial literary expressions of resistance. We can understand Mda's potentially contradictory appropriation of the postcolonial exotic as an act of what Huggan terms strategic exoticism, whereby Mda casts Qukezwa as a figure of authentic Indigenous femininity within the context of a global imaginary. This act of strategic exoticism, I argue, is a transcultural adaptation and application of what anthropologist Paul Nadasdy terms the "ecologically noble Indian" trope. In what follows, I will briefly discuss this figure, tracing its significance within a global imaginary, to inform the way in which Mda asserts a South African mode of Indigenous resistance.

The stereotype of the "ecologically noble Indian", Paul Nadasdy argues, has its roots in the "much older image of the noble savage" (298). From the nineteenth century up to the present day, "the image of the ecologically noble Indian has retained its symbolic importance" (298-9). As Nadasdy observes:

> This common stereotype is based on the assumption that indigenous people live in perfect harmony with the environment, more of nature than in it. Those who subscribe to this view cast indigenous people as "original conservationists," age-old stewards of the environment whose ecological wisdom and spiritual connections to the land can serve as an inspiration for those in industrial society who seek a new, more sustainable relationship with the environment. If we in industrial society would only heed their ancient teachings, the argument goes, indigenous peoples could lead us off the path to environmental destruction (292).

While many Indigenous cultures have epistemological paradigms that foreground the necessity of living in good relation with the non-human world, the archetype of the ecological

Indian should be understood as a development of a colonial narrative that justified Indigenous dispossession. As Harkin and Lewis suggest, the notion "of Indians living in harmony with nature is related to an ideology equating Indians with nature itself" (xxii). This formulation, they observe, is "a form of the *terra nullius* argument that provided the basic justification for conquest of Indian lands", by denying that the land was inhabited. The logic of terra nullius was similarly employed in South Africa, casting traditional African forms of land management as 'primitive' and inferior to European understandings of property.

Though this stereotype originates through Euroamerican portrayals of Native American cultures, it has, I suggest, in many respects come to act as a trope for Indigenous peoples globally. Accordingly, it has become a romanticising tendency that homogenises Indigenous peoples, ignoring the heterogeneity of Indigenous cultures and their widely different belief systems. Yet, simultaneously, it is often referenced by different global Indigenous groups for its symbolic value to further environmental, social and political causes. We can understand the transference of the ecologically noble Indian to the broader category of the 'ecologically noble Indigene' in the context of what Maximilian Forte identifies as the particular impact that "North American Indian labels, motifs, and representations" have on "influenc[ing] contemporary articulations" of indigeneity elsewhere ('We are not Extinct'). Writing from the perspective of Caribbean Indigenous identities, Forte problematises a globalised notion of indigeneity, which he argues is not multilateral. Instead, he highlights the way in which Native American and First Nations paradigms of indigeneity are amongst those most likely to sustain "the symbolic core of internationalised paradigms of indigeneity, providing perhaps a disproportionate amount of the motifs of indigeneity, the emblematic struggles, and the trademark representations of 'indigenous issues'" (Forte). The continued circulation of Native American motifs and symbols, as well as histories of anti-colonial resistance, is a factor in the historic development of indigeneity as a global symbol. This is particularly apparent when we consider the way in which African indigeneities are less visible on a global scale, compared with those in the anglophone settler colonial world. I argue, then, that the hypervisibility of Native Americans in the global imaginary as representative of Indigenous peoples has contributed to the global development of the 'ecologically noble Indigene' as an archetypal figure.

The three Khoi characters in the novel are all portrayed as mystical figures, the holders of traditional knowledge and custodians of the land. Yet, of the three, Qukezwa the second figures most centrally in the novel through her role as Indigenous guide for Camagu. As the representative Khoi character, Qukezwa is framed as an Indigenous 'eco-warrior'. She attempts to remediate the Qolorha landscape that colonialism has irrevocably altered, as well as resist the encroaching threat of capitalist development. Qukezwa takes it upon herself to

destroy the trees that "come from other countries … from Central America, from Australia … to suffocate our trees" (216). As Harry Sewlall notes: "[h]er seemingly reckless act of cutting down foreign trees may be viewed as a protest against what Alfred W. Crosby has termed "portmanteau biota", a collective term for the organisms that Europeans took with them to the lands they colonised" (384). Her environmental stance is therefore inherently decolonial, framed in opposition to the violent disruption of the eco-system brought about through European colonialism. Her acts of vandalism are not random but specifically carried out in relation to her knowledge of the land, killing only the trees that threaten the local ecosystem. Camagu learns that she targets the wattle tree because it "uses all the water": "Nothing can grow under [it]. It is an enemy since we do not have enough water in this country" (216). Similarly, her opposition to the touristic development is framed largely in relation to the environmental degradation that it will cause, as well as how it will alienate the local community from their environment and current way of life.

Qukezwa is positioned as a subversive figure, fitting with Nadasdy's framing of the ecological Indian archetype as "the antithesis of all that is wrong with Euro-American society" (299). The worldviews that she espouses offer Camagu, and the reader, an alternative to the teleological logic of capitalist development. Through Qukezwa, Mda foregrounds the epistemological value of Indigenous cultures, in a way that moves *beyond* a commodified aesthetic. This recovery of Indigenous epistemologies refutes the notion that such paradigms are incompatible with the concept of modernity and, indeed, asserts their relevance in relation to environmental conservation. While Nadasdy observes how Euroamerican environmentalists have adopted the symbolism of the ecologically noble Indian throughout history, Mda's use of this figure marks a notable development, as it occurs at a decidedly transnational and transcultural scale. Not only does Mda utilise this archetype in order to highlight the need for effective environmental protections in a *South African* context but – crucially – the symbolism is here transferred from the 'Indian' to the Khoi. By interrogating Mda's depiction of Qukezwa, I argue that Mda constructs a Khoisan indigeneity through appropriating the trope of the ecologically noble Indian. In doing so, Mda performs a mode of strategic exoticism that employs an exotic trope of indigeneity in a transnational, transcultural context. This reveals an awareness of how transnational paradigms of indigeneity circulate globally, as well as how the self-reflexive adoption of such simulations can be employed for political means. Yet, by self-reflexively foregrounding the specifically gendered appropriation of the Indigenous figure, Mda questions the continuation of exploitative dynamics in which he himself is arguably participating.

Qukezwa's role within the narrative serves a clear purpose in acting as an Indigenous guide for Camagu (and the reader), furthering knowledge of the local ecosystem and

Indigenous epistemologies. Due to her explicitly sexualised and racialised portrayal, her fleshy body is irrevocably wrought up in this idealised rendering of feminine Indigeneity. This is particularly discernible in one particular scene in the novel, where Qukezwa takes Camagu to visit Nongqawuse's pool. In a trance-like state, Qukezwa shares the memories of her Khoi ancestor and namesake, which are intertwined with her own to the point that she tells them in the first person:

> 'We stood here with the multitudes,' she says, her voice full of nostalgia. 'Visions appeared in the water. Nongqawuse herself stood here. Across the river the valley was full of ikhamanga. There were reeds too. They are no longer there. Only ikhamanga remains… We stood here and saw the wonders… Many things have changed. The reeds are gone.' (Mda, 105).

Notably stilted in comparison with elsewhere in the novel, Qukezwa's sentences are short and, often comprising only a few words, suggestive of being in a trance. This episode is one instance of several in which Mda employs the imaginary capacity of literature to portray the environmental impacts of colonialism over a long temporal scale. Elsewhere in the novel, this occurs through the narrative shifts, between the two timelines, but in this scene Qukezwa's enduring connection to her ancestor and their land facilitates this cross-temporal awareness of ecological change. Her ability to do so evokes a Khoi understanding of relationality that, as she says elsewhere in the novel, "all the Khoikhoi are one person" (196). Through Qukezwa, the novel registers what Smith understands as the "alternative ways of coming to know, and of being, which still endure within the indigenous world" yet which are "difficult […] for Western systems of knowledge to deal with or accept" (74). Yet, as a narrative strategy, this also positions Qukezwa within a romanticised frame of reference of indigeneity, as a 'mystical' or spiritual figure with a connection to the landscape that exceeds Western understanding. This status is epitomised through Qukezwa's immaculate conception towards the end of the novel. Further, Camagu himself fails to register Qukezwa's words, as she shares with him the memories of her ancestor. Instead, he is seized by an intensely erotic physical reaction: "a bout of madness. He fights hard against the urge to hold this girl, tightly, and kiss her all over" (105). Camagu's embodied reaction, sharply juxtaposed with Qukezwa's act of cross-temporal remembering, evokes the way in which, within cultural contact zones, indigeneity is frequently mediated in ways that fail to find meaningful forms of engagement, instead being characterised by processes of exotification and, frequently, gendered modes of eroticization.

This is a feature that characterises Camagu's relationship with Qukezwa throughout the novel. Referring to her repeatedly as "this wild woman", Camagu's desire for Qukezwa is the gendered manifestation of a modern condition of nostalgia for an untameable and pristine wilderness, as well as an idealised pre-colonial past (149). The language employed in the recurring emphasis on Qukezwa's racialised body recalls the historic hypersexualised gaze with which Khoi women were viewed by colonisers. This is in fact referenced by Camagu, who recounts the history of Saartjie Baartman to the villagers, telling them: "In Paris the private parts of a Khoikhoi woman called Saartjie Baartman are kept in a bottle!" (168). Though he attempts to convey to the group that, "It is not in the past… It is in the present. Those trophies are still there… today… as we speak" (168-9), Camagu does not understand the full implications of the legacy of Baartman's sexual objectification. It is not only the issue of repatriation that is at stake. Rather, the exoticization of African women's bodies continues into the present – indeed, is being perpetuated by Camagu, through his interactions with Qukezwa as well as his mobilization of Nongqawuse's memory.

To place this into the context of my earlier discussion, the novel's depiction of tourism emphasises how the industry perpetuates colonial processes of exploitation, including gendered forms. For, the resolution of Mda's novel hinges on Qolorha being established as a national heritage site due to the appropriation of Nongqawuse's memory. As Camagu informs Dalton at the close of the novel: "Nongqawuse really sells the holiday camp […] When we advertise in all the important travel magazines we use her name. Qolorha is the place of miracles" (276). The only downside, he laments, is the absence of her physical remains, as it "would have been even more profitable if she had been buried there". Camagu's tourist development project is therefore situated on a continuum of ongoing commodification of African women, highlighting the way in which African women's bodies have historically been and continue to be exploited. Camagu and Dalton's initiative is suggested to replicate gendered patterns of violence, in spite of the fact that the actors have shifted: it is no longer European colonisers, but the amaXhosa doing it for the ostensible benefit of the community. While the novel doesn't necessarily condemn this process, it highlights the shifting dynamics of exploitation within the postcolonial nation and the continuation of specifically gendered modes of oppression.

If we understand Mda as an environmental writer-activist, as I suggested earlier, the political potential of the narrative hinges on the transcultural adoption of the archetypal figure of the ecologically noble Indian. Mda's work employs the rhetorical power of this figure through his representation of the Khoi and, specifically, Qukezwa. Yet, Mda gestures towards the problematic nature of such an act of appropriation, by placing his own practice on a continuum of historic exploitation of African women's bodies for their symbolic value.

Mda is therefore attuned to the potential violence of this mode of exotification, while also contributing to it by rendering Qukezwa as an archetype of feminine indigeneity. As such, we can situate this uneasy adoption in terms of what Huggan understands as an inherent paradox of literary forms of strategic exoticism. Huggan writes that strategic exoticism is an "option" but "not necessarily a way out of the dilemma" (32). He writes: "Indeed, the self-conscious use of exoticist techniques and modalities of cultural representation might be considered less as a response to the phenomenon of the postcolonial exotic than as a further symptom of it" (Huggan, 32-3). Reading *The Heart of Redness* raises this concern specifically in relation to *transcultural* performances of strategic exoticism. Such examples require that we look beyond the modes of *self*-exotification that Huggan highlights, to those transcultural examples that are the product of the transnational circulation of commodified images of indigeneity – a process that is perpetuated through the global literary marketplace. While *The Heart of Redness* does not offer any resolution, it highlights the multiple levels at which gendered and racialised processes of exotification occur, in between and across unevenly marginalised groups in distinct postcolonial spaces. In doing so, the narrative raises questions surrounding the role of the author in this process. This in itself offers an important insight, as we consider the role of the world literary novel as a form that is always implicated in the circulation, reinscription and translation of cultural symbols.

Conclusion

Nearing the end of Thomas King's 1999 novel *Truth and Bright Water,* the Indian Days festival that has brought a host of tourists to Bright Water is drawing to a close. The tourists have taken over the activities on the fictional Canadian reserve and the Blackfoot, once the main focus, have been pushed to the sidelines. In a scene that articulates the intersecting scales of expropriation and exclusion that results from the commodification of Indigenous cultures under capitalist modernity, Tecumseh encounters the character Lucy Rabbit:

> "Pretty good crowd," I say.
>
> "You came too late." Lucy wipes her mouth. Most of the lipstick is gone and her lips look pale and cold. "No room left for the Indians." And she drops her shoulders, eases her way back into the crowd, and disappears (King, 221).

By the time the festival ends, the Blackfoot have been entirely displaced by the romanticised stereotypes of Indians that pervade the touristic space. The predominantly Western tourists that are themselves playing Indian have directly displaced them, in a process that mirrors the overarching settler colonial imperative to take territory and replace the Native (Wolfe, 389).

As Lucy herself disappears into the crowd, this scene evokes the way that myths of authenticity contribute directly to the erasure of Indigenous peoples and cultures. Through this scene, King articulates the intersecting scales of expropriation and exclusion that result from the commodification of Indigenous cultures under capitalist modernity. I end this chapter with this passage in order to bring together some of the key preoccupations of this chapter. Namely, how literary engagements with the commodification of Indigenous and other marginalised cultures can reveal the colonial logics that exist within and motivate the global tourism and literary industries. And, following this, what spaces of resistance or disruption can be found within them?

In my analysis of *Truth and Bright Water,* I have argued that King invites reflection on the role of the Indigenous author by playfully disrupting the expectations placed upon Native writers within the context of the world literary marketplace. King's adoption of strategic exoticism here is subversive. King formally enacts narrative refusal at the end of the novel, by using untranslated Cherokee to render (non-Cherokee speaking) readers alien. In doing so, *Truth and Bright Water* refuses the dynamics of accessibility that are perpetuated through the tourist and literary industries, while rendering the power imbalance of such cross-cultural encounters visible. Authorial performativity, when considered in this context, becomes a valuable tool through which agency can be recovered and processes of erasure disrupted. As with *Truth and Bright Water*, the mobilization of tourism as a theme in *The Heart of Redness* facilitates the creation of a front stage-back stage dynamic that is both within the narrative and part of its construction. Establishing this dynamic at the level of form and narrative diegesis allows both novels to play with literary conventions of accessibility. Mda's narrative, however, allows the reader to cross this imagined boundary, as Camagu enters an ostensibly sacred space and, with the reader, witnesses the performance of a cultural ritual. Yet, this serves to highlight Camagu's particularly complex detachment from the culture, through showing that the only way he is able to interact with the ritual is by rendering it to be 'spectacle'. Through Camagu's interactions with the Qolorha community, *The Heart of Redness* evokes not only the multiple layers of privilege and precarity that shape contemporary South African experiences, but also the way in which processes of exploitation and exoticization occur within and across marginalised groups. The novel highlights the ways that ethnic, cultural, and even national modes of identification in post-apartheid South Africa are complicated by the material, spatial, and cultural effects of colonialism (including experiences of dispossession and exile). Such legacies are complicated in the contemporary moment through the uneven nature of capitalist development and the dynamics of core and periphery, particularly examined in *The Heart of Redness* through the divergences between rural and urban ways of life. Further, through tracing the transcultural refractions of the ecological Indian

trope – an archetype that King explicitly rejects – Mda's novel forces us to consider how expressions of resistance can be implicated in processes that reinscribe gendered and racialised narratives of repressive authenticity. If we consider the multiple and intersecting ramifications that result from the global circulation of narratives of repressive authenticity, the disruption of these constructions is a political act of resistance. In the final chapter, I extend my consideration of capitalist globalization in this chapter to consider how selected Native American and South African authors are using the novel to imagine futures beyond capitalist modernity. The texts I focus on by Silko and Duiker advance non-anthropocentric expressions of decolonial resistance that centre the need to recover relational onto-epistemologies in the struggle for environmental and social justice.

3

Decolonization in an Age of Planetary Crisis:
Leslie Marmon Silko's *Almanac of the Dead* and K. Sello Duiker's *The Quiet Violence of Dreams*

Indigenous freedom is not just the absence of settler colonialism, not just the absence of monsters, it is the amplified presence of Indigenous life and just relations with human and non-human others and with this earth.
– Nick Estes, *Our History is the Future* (2019)

The novels covered so far destabilise the negative power of narratives through subversion, irony and disruption. They articulate, in no uncertain terms, the role that narratives play in creating and sustaining structures of oppression, highlighting the damage that continues to be wrought through settler colonial narratives of race and progress. However, they also frequently attest to the *positive* potential of stories as active, indeed animated, tools for transformation. In using the word animated I draw on the theoretical work of Mel Y. Chen, who uses this to refer to a quality of "agency, awareness, mobility and liveness" that is discursively (un)attributed to different bodies, objects and forms (2). When Indigenous and marginalised peoples have the opportunity to create and tell their own stories, the animacy of narratives is realised. The dynamic potential of stories is a fundamental component of survivance, which as Vizenor argues is dependent on the "continuance of stories" through an "active sense of presence" (vii). The previous chapters have interrogated some of the seminal narratives reproduced from colonial to contemporary eras, ranging from those that were employed to justify dispossession in the colonial contact zone, to the commodified narratives of indigeneity and authenticity reinscribed through touristic and literary discourses. In this final chapter, my focus turns to the potential of stories employed in the service of decolonization. This marks a temporal shift with a turn to futurity and a consideration of the role that the novel can play in imagining decolonial futures.

As I've shown over the course of this thesis, stories are integral to many Native American and South African knowledge systems. Following Laurelyn Whitt, Indigenous knowledge is "typically tied so intimately to experience and imagination as to be

inconceivable without them" (35). In this chapter, I explore how the imaginative potential of stories can be wielded in the service of communicating alternative knowledges to a global audience. Focusing on literary engagements with Native American and African onto-epistemologies, I undertake close readings of two novels that are animated by an ethic of relationality: *Almanac of the Dead* (1991) by Laguna Pueblo author Leslie Marmon Silko and *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* (2001) by the late South African author K. Sello Duiker. Both works register the integrative power of stories formally and thematically, framing them to be a connecting force between heterogenous groups. Through stories, these novels make structures of relationality visible between human and non-human worlds, disrupting the separatist and hierarchical logic of coloniality.

Following the discussion of decolonization in the introduction to this thesis, one aim in this chapter is to consider the way that approaches to decolonization cohere or diverge across Native American and South African literary contexts, with a particular emphasis on where decoloniality meets the question of environmental remediation. The contemporary environmental crisis, the effects of which disproportionately affect Indigenous and peripheral communities, should be understood on a continuum of colonial violence. Whyte reorients our perceptions of climate change in this way when he argues, "[a]nthropogenic (human-caused) climate change is an intensification of environmental change imposed on Indigenous peoples by colonialism" (153). My consideration of these novels examines the intersections of coloniality, capitalism and environmental crisis. The novels by Silko and Duiker confront the global threat of anthropogenic climate change from the perspective of those for whom the apocalypse of colonialism has already occurred. As I demonstrate, these novels articulate a shared grammar for decolonization that is rooted in the need to make kin. By using the term kin, I follow feminist Indigenous thinkers including TallBear, whose scholarship emphasises the need to build relations of care with human and non-human others. Both novels situate their calls for decolonization in firm relation to anti-capitalist movements that foreground the need for alternative epistemic and ontological approaches. This is an important point because, though Duiker and Silko evoke the need to recover traditional forms of environmental knowledge in order to challenge the climate crisis, this knowledge is inseparable from a wider epistemological and ontological awakening. In other words, the questions of environmental justice and social justice are inseparable. Both novels envision models of decolonial community that operate at planetary scales – a word I use to emphasise not only the global scope of these communities but also the significance of the planet in material terms. Conceiving of the planetary, rather than the transnational or global,

surpasses the limitations of nationalism and capitalist globalization.[88] In this context, a planetary lens demands that we move beyond an anthropocentric understanding of decolonization to attend to the entwined effects of coloniality/modernity on human and non-human worlds. This framing follows Indigenous North American worldviews, which understand human and non-human environments as always entangled through complex sets of kinship relations. As TallBear emphasises, to understand genocide in its full meaning in the Americas, "requires an understanding of the entangled genocide of humans and nonhumans here. Indigenous peoples cohere as peoples in relation to very specific places and nonhuman communities. Their/our decimation goes hand in hand" ('Beyond the Life/Not-Life Binary', 198). Within both novels, this kind of awareness of relationality emerges through a marked parallel between the histories of colonial and capitalist violence affected on human and non-human forms.

Published in 1991, *Almanac of the Dead* is Silko's second novel following the widely-celebrated publication of *Ceremony* in 1977.[89] Silko received the Macarthur Foundation fellowship in 1981 to complete the manuscript, resulting in a text that, as David L. Moore observes, "stands among the many original MacArthur projects working creatively to change the world" (101). It has been described by Creek-Cherokee scholar Craig Womack as "one of the most important books" of the twentieth century (cited in Tillett, 6). In contrast to Silko's debut, however, *Almanac* was met with mixed reviews, many of which focused on its vast scope, complex structure and disturbing content, which ranges from the gritty depictions of drug abuse and sex work to the illegal trade of human organs. Despite what Ann Folwell Stanford observed in 1997 as an "intriguing [critical] silence" surrounding the text, there has since developed a substantial amount of scholarship dedicated to the analysis of this work. Scholarship on the novel spans fields of literary studies including Indigenous studies, American studies, postcolonial studies, ecocriticism, border studies, medical humanities and queer theory (cited in Tillett, 6). An "overtly and often uncomfortably political" novel, *Almanac* is concerned with the ongoing and overlapping global conditions of colonialism and capitalism (Tillett, 5). With no single protagonist or storyline, it brings together a diverse cast of characters from a range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds, sexualities and genders. They are all connected, however, in some way to the growing decolonial movement spreading across the Americas, which builds in force before the novel culminates on the precipice of revolution. Set at an unspecified point in the near future, the novel imagines the apocalyptic consequences of capitalist-driven climate change, which has

[88] Here I am thinking of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's theorization of "planetarity", which argues for "the planet to overwrite the globe" for this reason (*Death of a Discipline,* 72).
[89] From this point on, I will refer to the text using the shortened signifier: *Almanac.*

rendered the earth uninhabitable. It anticipates protest movements such as the 1994 Zapatista uprising and the 2011 Occupy Wall Street protest, as it envisions the growth of an anti-capitalist movement comprising dispossessed peoples from across the Americas.[90] This uprising is framed in terms of continued Indigenous resistance to colonial oppression across the Americas, as the first pages of the novel proclaim: "The defiance and resistance to things European continue unabated. The Indian Wars have never ended in the Americas" (15). Though the revolution is led by the Indigenous Peoples' Army of the Americas, comprising a trans-Indigenous collective from across the United States and Mexico, they are joined by others: eco-terrorists, homeless army veterans, animal spirits, and the ghosts of Indigenous Americans and African slaves. Together, they call for "the return of all tribal lands" (15); the undoing of colonial borders; and an end to the "vampiric" capitalist world-system that is draining the earth's resources (542). While previous criticism of the novel (Huhndorf, 2009; Romero 2002; Krupat and Elliott, 2006), has focused on the cross-cultural and international connections that are framed as necessary to the decolonial project, I argue that the notion of relationality enables us to re-evaluate these connections and expand upon them to understand Silko's re-orientation of the human and non-human.

The Quiet Violence of Dreams, Duiker's second novel, was published in 2001 shortly after his debut, *Thirteen Cents* (2000). It won the 2001 Herman Charles Bosman Prize and has been celebrated for its exploration of fluid male sexualities, noted as "one of the first noteworthy South African texts to engage critically and meaningfully with same-sex intimacies" (Carolin and Frenkel, 38). Due to Duiker's bold renderings of urban post-apartheid life and his formally innovative style, he was hailed a poster boy of the post-apartheid generation of writers. However, he took his own life in January 2005, aged 30, having published three novels. Despite being a celebrated writer in South Africa, Duiker has received relatively little international attention. Like *Almanac,* Duiker's text makes for difficult reading through its harsh depictions of the reality of urban poverty in post-transition South Africa.[91] Primarily set in Cape Town and Johannesburg, the novel's representations of ongoing racial divisions, anti-immigrant hostility and homophobic violence dispel the 'rainbow nation' myth of the new South Africa.[92] Duiker writes against the celebration of Cape Town in popular global consciousness as an idyllic cosmopolitan tourist destination: a

[90] The Zapatista movement is an Indigenous rights, anti-colonial and anti-neoliberal struggle led by the Zapatista National Liberation Front in Chiapas, Mexico. The movement, which calls for the reform of land and democracy in Mexico, began in 1994 with an armed rebellion in San Cristobal de las Casas. The Zapatistas currently govern a large portion of land in Chiapas. For further reading, see Santos pp. 460-5.
[91] From this point on I will refer to the novel using the shortened signifier *Quiet Violence.*
[92] The term 'rainbow nation' has become ubiquitous with the South African transition, stemming from the nation-building project led by the ANC, which emphasised racial and cultural inclusivity. Archbishop Desmond Tutu is commonly credited with coining the phrase.

depiction that relies on the natural landscape and a narrative of harmonious multiculturalism, while suppressing the less-palatable realities of structural inequality, xenophobia, and environmental precarity. In Duiker's own words, the novel is an attempt to go "beneath the skin of Cape Town's postcard beauty" (cited in Mzamane, 29). The novel has a range of narrators, though the protagonist is Tshepo: a black university student suffering from mental illness following childhood trauma. The novel follows Tshepo on his journey to maturation and eventual recovery and, as Lucy Valerie Graham has argued, subversively engages with the Bildungsroman genre (168). After finding employment as a male escort, Tshepo realises his sexuality and, ultimately, his place within a pan-African, decolonial queer movement.

Like *Almanac*, *Quiet Violence* understands the possibility of decolonial futurity lying in transcultural solidarity and the recovery of alternative epistemologies. Though its scope is African, the movement in *Quiet Violence* shares much with that in *Almanac*, as it comprises people from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds all of whom contribute to the collective project of building "a new way of life" (455). Scholarship on the novel tends to focus on Duiker's treatment of sexuality, black masculinity and post-apartheid urban South Africa. My reading departs from other interpretations by drawing out the largely uninterrogated environmental aspects. Carolin and Frenkel are critical of scholarship on the novel that tends to "sideline the literary and cultural significance of the text's multiple sexual encounters" or, instead, read the novel's sexual encounters allegorically (38). However, I suggest that Duiker's thematic engagements with the environment and male sexuality demonstrate these concerns to be fundamentally connected. As I show through an emphasis on epistemic and ontological decolonization, Duiker's treatment of sexuality should be understood as a necessary component of his broader recovery of African onto-epistemologies.

In the introduction to this thesis, I suggested that relationality can be employed as a method by which to read texts from ostensibly disparate spaces in relation to one another. In this chapter, I expand upon this method as I directly interrogate Silko and Duiker's engagements with relationality. Here, I place the novels into dialogue with one another – an approach made possible as the novels themselves are animated by an ethic of relationality, which manifests at thematic and formal levels. *Almanac* positions the Indigenous peoples' struggle in the Americas in relation to other anti-colonial movements, including in South Africa, while *Quiet Violence* calls attention to the worldviews and struggles of other colonised groups, including Native Americans. By drawing out the connections between the texts, both explicit and implicit, I show that reading the novels *relationally* enables a more holistic understanding of literary decolonial strategies. Arguing that both novels employ relationality as decolonial method, I focus on two particular ways in which this manifests. Firstly, I explore the relationality between humans that might, in Davis's terms, be seen as an

awareness of the "intersectionality of struggles" (70). I employ legal scholar Boaventura de Sousa Santos's notion of subaltern cosmopolitanism to understand the heteroglossic structures of the novels, as well as the decolonial movements that are invoked at the level of plot. However, reading them together demands being attuned to the limitations of cross-cultural approaches. The spirit of the intersectionality of struggles, while potentially a productive and generative force, is often limited due to the flattening of points of divergence between geopolitical contexts. The second manifestation of relationality that I emphasise is that between human and non-human environments. Reading the non-human as a disruptive force, I argue that the decolonial potential of these novels is located in the authors' attempts to imagine futures rooted in alternative worldviews that disrupt the logic of modernity/coloniality. I argue that each work demonstrates how literature can do the necessary work of unsettling the separatist logic of coloniality, through the recovery of relational discourses that enable different ways of being in the world. Together, these texts create a shared grammar for decolonization that foregrounds the resurgence of non-Western onto-epistemologies. As I demonstrate, this includes the resurgence of Indigenous and African beliefs surrounding gender and sexuality, as well as approaches to the natural world. Such processes of resurgence in the novels exemplify biskaaybiiyang: an Anishinaabe word meaning "returning to ourselves", which Grace L. Dillon understands as vital to decoloniality (10). Through foregrounding relational worldviews, each text emphasises the need to make kin by building relations with human and non-human others. My analysis of *The Plague of Doves* in Chapter One considered the alternative forms of community that Erdrich imagines, which offer networks of support for those rendered precious by the neoliberal settler state. In this chapter, I expand upon this to understand planetary communities that transcend culture, race and even species.

These types of ideas have gained traction in critical theory in recent years – from Butler's theory of interdependence and understanding of precariousness as a shared human condition, to Haraway's concepts of "multi-species justice" and "responsability" (*Staying with the Trouble,* 2). Haraway suggests that existing in the Chthulucene, which she understands to be "a kind of timeplace for learning to stay with the trouble of living and dying in response-ability on a damaged earth" requires that we engage in the process of making kin across species, while mindful that such a practice demands attention to the specific dynamics of place, power, and histories of exploitation that come into contact as we make "oddkin" (2). As African literary studies scholar Cajetan Iheka observes, "[i]t appears that we are starting to pay attention to what many African societies and other non-Western cultures believed and practiced for generations" (60). Yet, as scholars including TallBear have noted, these discourses frequently fail to engage with these pre-existing traditions of thought. The field

of new materialism, which has called for more attention to be paid to the "energetic vitality" of "things […] generally conceived as inert" has been heavily critiqued for its effacement of Indigenous knowledge (Bennett, 5). Indeed, TallBear criticises the "invisibility of [Indigenous] ontologies" within new materialist writing, arguing that while the "new materialists may take the intellectual intervention that grounds the vital-materialist creed as something new in the world […] the fundamental insights are not new for everyone" ('Beyond the Life/Not-Life Binary', 198). By excluding and even expropriating the thought practices of Indigenous and other non-Western cultures, these new fields of discourse risk replicating the power structures they ostensibly seek to dismantle.

One of the consequences of this failure to engage with Indigenous and African discourses is that (de)coloniality is frequently overlooked. Within Indigenous studies, at least, conversations around relationality and human and non-human relations often speak to larger debates around colonialism and decolonization. However, this is not always the case elsewhere. Haraway's work is an exception, which centres "decolonial indigenous peoples and projects", which she understands as "central to [her] stories of alliance" (71). Yet, this marks a sharp contrast with the obfuscation of non-Western experiences and worldviews that occurs in much critical theory. For example, Butler's theorization of vulnerability as a shared human condition recognises that precarity is "allocated differentially across the globe" and a criticism of modern-day colonialisms is implicit in her work (*Precarious Life*, 31). Through its universalising perspective, however, her work fails to account for the specific forms that vulnerability takes in settler colonial and postcolonial contexts, stopping short of thinking through what the undoing of these particular manifestations of vulnerability could look like. Further, her recent work on interdependence is framed in relation to a critique of the Enlightenment's emphasis on individualism, yet does not acknowledge the numerous Indigenous traditions that share similar notions of relationality – nor does she account for the violence that Enlightenment ideologies have done to non-Western cultures that are rooted in an ethics of interdependence.[93]

Though frequently characterised as pre-modern, or 'primitive', Native American and South African works that feature animist or relational belief systems often centre their significance in terms of futurity. In the case of Silko's novel, these traditional ways of knowing and being are held on to by tribal communities in a rejection of the future that's being offered to them. In *Quiet Violence,* such community-based knowledge has largely disappeared, but Duiker suggests that it is possible to recover alternative ways of being through process of re-awakening. Thus, such knowledges are not relegated to the past or

[93] See Butler's Gifford Lecture series at the University of Glasgow, entitled 'My Life, Your Life: Equality and the Philosophy of Non-Violence' (2018)

conceived of as pre-modern; rather, they enable a reconceptualization of more equitable futures through challenging the individualism and anthropocentricism of capitalist modernity

Decolonial Subaltern Cosmopolitanism

As numerous Indigenous, African and decolonial thinkers, from Fanon to Wynter, have shown, the category of the human has always failed to account for gendered and racialised bodies. As Butler observes, this concept has always been fluid:

> Wherever there is the human, there is the inhuman; when we now proclaim as human some group of beings who have previously not been considered to be, in fact, human, we admit that the claim to 'humanness' is a shifting prerogative […] some humans qualify as human; some humans do not (*Frames of War*, 76).

The exclusion of selected humans from Humanity was integral to the Western project of coloniality/modernity. As discussed in Chapter One, racialization facilitated the Othering of entire peoples to justify enslavement, dispossession and death. Following Wynter, we understand that foundational to the "coloniality of power" was the organization of life according to patriarchal, white supremacist and socio-economic hierarchies. The white bourgeois Man came to define the human, which forced

> the peoples of the militarily expropriated New World territories (i.e., Indians), as well as the enslaved peoples of Black Africa (i.e., Negroes) […] to reoccupy the matrix slot of Otherness – to be made into the physical referent of the idea of the irrational/ subrational Human Other (Wynter, 266).

This hierarchization, which situated Native Americans and South Africans as less-than-human, served to facilitate the dispossession of these peoples and their territories. Both *Almanac* and *Quiet Violence* are attuned to the processes of racialization that have served to violently exclude Indigenous peoples and Africans from a normative settler definition of humanity in the name of Western progress. Silko and Duiker's novels attest to the socio-economic legacies of historic classifications of race and the ways that they continue to shape experiences under capitalist modernity. Tshepo, the protagonist of *Quiet Violence,* upon seeing an old black woman in the impoverished Nyanga township, "skinny, bent double and […] hungry", asks: "Wouldn't it be strange if she was a white woman? Wouldn't it be disturbing – white, barefoot, skinny and old?" (Duiker, 429). Such provocations highlight how racialised

hierarchies shape social conditions of grievability, which continue to persist in post-apartheid South Africa.

However, *Almanac* and *Quiet Violence* also examine the way that, in a neoliberal context, precarity exceeds a logic of race. This condition is a consequence of the hierarchies that Jason Moore suggests capitalism was built upon, which privilege 'Humanity' over 'Nature'. While this latter category included "indigenous peoples [and] enslaved Africans", it also comprised "nearly all women, and even many white-skinned men (Slavs, Jews, the Irish)" (78). Though these categories have shifted and mutated over time, precarity under neoliberal capitalism should be understood as informed not only by race, but also gender, nationality, religion, sexuality and numerous other factors. While cognizant of the violence that processes of racialization have done to Indigenous and African American peoples, *Almanac* expands on this to consider how women, LGBTQ+ people, the poor, the homeless and the disabled have been rendered disposable in the neoliberal settler state. By envisaging a movement in which the dispossessed come together, Silko rejects a formulation of resistance that is solely based on race. Duiker, too, moves beyond a race-based paradigm in *Quiet Violence*, as Tshepo emphasises the exclusionary and potentially violent consequences of movements centred around ethnocentrism. Instead, the narratives within the novel chart the uneven conditions of precarity in post-apartheid South Africa, attending to the ways that racial forms of oppression intersect with class, sexuality and gender. While both works understand that precarity is experienced differently amongst these groups – whose experiences are not suggested to be coterminous – they are suggestive of the possibility of commonality in shared struggle to produce forms of allegiance. The relational ethic of community that the novels enact disavows the emphasis on individuality that is integral to neoliberal capitalism.

As the decolonial movements within *Quiet Violence* and *Almanac* gradually build, we witness the coming together of peoples from diverse cultural, racial and socio-economic backgrounds. Central to both texts are calls for solidarity between distinct peoples and across unevenly experienced forms of colonial and capitalist violence. This logic is suggestive of a need to reject colonial modes of categorization entirely, exemplifying decoloniality in Maldonado Torres's terms, which he understands as "giving oneself to and joining the struggles with the *damnés*, beyond recognition, to bring about community and the formation of an-other world" (*Outline of Ten Theses*, 30). These movements, which seek in different ways to challenge the machinations of coloniality, exemplify what Santos defines as subaltern cosmopolitanism. A mode of organization between distinct groups of people, this form of cosmopolitanism evolves out of "an awareness of the new opportunities for transnational creativity and solidarity" and is "intended to counteract detrimental effects of hegemonic

forms of globalization" (Santos, 180). Santos critiques earlier iterations of cosmopolitanism as a "privilege of those that can afford it" and instead argues for "a different type of cosmopolitanism" that is counterhegemonic and anti-capitalist in nature (460). Santos thus proposes that

> [s]ubaltern, oppositional cosmopolitanism is the cultural and political form of counter-hegemonic globalization. It is the name of the emancipatory projects whose claims and criteria of social inclusion reach beyond the horizons of global capitalism (460).

Counter-hegemonic and emancipatory in nature, this approach lends itself to decolonial thought and action. Santos explicitly highlights the applicability of subaltern cosmopolitanism to Indigenous rights movements. He cites the Zapatista movement in Chiapas as one such example, through their struggle to defend Indigenous rights while resisting "other forms of oppression – from neo-liberal economic oppression to gender domination – and by eliciting the support of sympathetic movements" (252). Through subaltern cosmopolitan projects, Santos argues that it becomes possible to work towards an "alternative globalization" (460).

This concept provides a productive lens through which to analyse the formal structures of *Almanac* and *Quiet Violence,* as well as the decolonial movements that are imagined in their narratives. In a Bakhtinian sense, both are dialogic and heteroglossic, giving voice to a diverse range of identities and experiences. Primarily set in Cape Town, Duiker's novel is geographically less expansive than Silko's, which traverses three continents. However, both utilise complex multi-layered narrative structures with focal characters of different races, genders and sexualities. The narrative form of each therefore creates an expansive map of diverse experiences that mirrors the heterogeneity within the movements themselves. The interconnected narratives foreground the intersecting scales of subalternity, faced by those living with the legacies of colonialism on the peripheries of the capitalist world-system. In this way, both novels enact subaltern cosmopolitanism by framing diverse experiences and narratives in dynamic relation to one another. Their structures can be understood through an engagement with multidirectional memory, which creates a space for diverse memories and experiences to circulate and coexist in a non-competitive space. In developing this concept, Rothberg argues that multidirectional memory offers the "potential to create new forms of solidarity and new visions of justice" through "productive" processes of "ongoing negotiation, cross-referencing, and borrowing" (*Multidirectional Memory,* 32-3). In bringing together subaltern cosmopolitan narratives of colonial and capitalist violence,

Almanac and *Quiet Violence* operate as multidirectional archives of memory, forming the basis for productive exchange. This results not only in the recognition of the experiences of others, but also a more holistic understanding of the way that these structures of violence are connected. Their narrative styles are, I argue, central to their decolonial aesthetics, as this formal strategy disrupts the hierarchical logic of coloniality and its concomitant modes of categorization.

While Santos highlights that subaltern cosmopolitan expressions of "transnational creativity and solidarity" are enabled by the technological advances and increased connectivity of late capitalism, they fundamentally build on ideas of relationality that are intrinsic to many Indigenous and African cultures (180). These ethics are not new, though many of the channels through which they are articulated – such as the global literary marketplace and social media – have made new forms of exchange possible. Drawing out the subaltern cosmopolitan impulses of these novels, then, requires emphasising the way that they each frame this ethic in relation to the recovery of relational worldviews. The word *recovery* is crucial here, because colonialism fundamentally "disrupted Indigenous knowledge transfer practices" (Warrior, *Baring the Windigo's Teeth*, 47). Thus, finding ways to recover and re-evaluate those forms of knowledge that have been displaced is a concern that both Duiker and Silko's works emphasise. I do not argue that these novels reflect these worldviews either in form or content simply because of the cultural and geopolitical spaces within which they have been produced. Rather, it is my contention that these novels use the space of the novel to negotiate and unsettle the logic of coloniality, which is achieved through the recovery of those worldviews that were once disavowed.

"The weight of ghosts": Memory as a productive force in *Almanac of the Dead*

Over the course of more than seven hundred pages, *Almanac* expansively details the intersecting histories and legacies of colonialism in the Americas over a period of 500 years. Through roaming third person narratives that give the perspectives of over twenty focal characters, *Almanac* accounts for the uneven impact of coloniality that shapes the lives of communities, including Indigenous, settler, and arrivant. Stories have power and memory specifically figures as a productive force that, the narrative suggests, can be wielded as a weapon. Narratives that focus on different tribal contexts connect the diverse histories of cultural genocide and anti-colonial resistance across the Americas. This simultaneously highlights the heterogeneity of Indigenous nations and the homogenising imperative of colonial domination that categorised the hundreds of distinct Indigenous cultures under the singular noun 'Indian'. Through the character Sterling, the novel traces various forms of dispossession and exploitation experienced by the Laguna Pueblo in New Mexico, from the

historic theft of sacred cultural objects to uranium mining on the reservation in the mid-twentieth century. Through oral storytelling, the character Yoeme invokes the history of the Yaqui people that span the Mexico-United States border and the brutal treatment they received at the hands of the Mexican army. Elsewhere, her granddaughter Lecha's transformative encounters with Eskimo and Yupik women in Alaska convey the breadth of shared experiences across Indigenous nations. Emphasising the destructive reach of settler colonialism, even in incredibly remote spaces, this roving focus provides the potential for mutual exchange.

As with Erdrich, Wicomb and Mda's novels, discussed in earlier chapters, Silko's use of a complex, non-linear narrative emphasises how historic events continuously inform the present. By foregrounding how contemporary conditions of precarity are shaped by earlier manifestations of colonial violence, *Almanac* registers the enduring nature of colonialism in the United States. As such, the colonial history of the Americas is understood to be a "past not yet past", to borrow Christina Sharpe's phrase (13).[94] Colonialism's material legacies serve as physical reminders of how the settler state has historically and continues to render Indigenous bodies precarious. The ruins of the abandoned uranium mine, which actively pollutes the land and waters of the Laguna Pueblo, highlights the long temporal frame of slow violence, brought about through the settler state's reliance on an extractive economy.[95] Further, the novel evokes a distinct Indigenous conceptualization of temporality that is suggested to diverge from Euroamerican perceptions of time. Recalling the theft of the ancient stone figures at Laguna Pueblo, the narrator observes that, even though they had been stolen seventy years before, "at Laguna, people remembered the crime as though it had just been committed" (31). Sterling realises that this Pueblo understanding of temporality is out of sync with modernity, observing "that seventy years [is] nothing – a mere heartbeat at Laguna" (34). This understanding of temporality exemplifies how "Indigenous narrations and sensations of time may not accord with dominant settler accounts or models" (Rifkin, *Beyond Settler Time,* 19). Rifkin identifies the features of what he calls "Indigenous time", which he argues include:

> modes of periodization; the felt presence of ancestors; affectively consequential memories of prior dispossessions; the ongoing legacies of such dispossessions;

[94] Sharpe's work is focused on the legacies of slavery on contemporary black life in the diaspora. She uses this phrase to specifically consider the way that the histories of slavery permeate black life in the present. As a concept, however, it has clear relevance to the global legacies of colonial violence and the way in which authors use literature to render such legacies visible.

[95] The legacies of historic uranium mining in the Southwest are an ongoing health crisis amongst Indigenous communities. For further reading see *Wastelanding: Legacies of Uranium Mining in Navajo Country* (Voyles).

> knowledges arising from enduring occupancy in a particular homeland, including attunement to animal and climatic periodicities […] and a palpable set of responsibilities to prior generations and future ones (19).

This conceptualization of Indigenous time diverges from what Rifkin terms "settler time" and is productive when examining *Almanac's* cross-temporal decolonial aesthetics. The past is entangled with the present, to the extent that the presence of the ancestors literally adds "weight" to the struggle taking place in the contemporary timeline (189). Their ghosts participate in the revolution, which is situated as the climax of a transgenerational, anti-colonial movement that began five hundred years ago in the Americas and "never ended" (15). The cross-temporal nature of resistance is registered through the afterlives of Indigenous histories of resistance, which are animated in the present. Silko's narrative reimagines the exploits of the Apache warrior Geronimo, depicting him to be a trickster figure that evaded capture. Though the historical record shows that he surrendered to colonial forces in 1886, in fact "the real Geronimo got away" with a look-alike arrested in his place (Silko, 224). With the spirit of Geronimo evading capture, as Wenzel notes, "the meaning – and even the manifestation – of a revolutionary hero exceeds a single human lifespan" (Wenzel, 6). The active remembrance of Geronimo and the tales of his evasion serve as a paradigm for the ever-shifting and resilient nature of Native resistance, which drives the revolution. *Almanac* thus animates historical narratives of resistance in the service of disrupting the colonial present, in order to bring about Indigenous futurity.

Through archival engagements at formal and thematic levels, *Almanac* demonstrates the cultural preoccupation with the archive that I identified in Chapter One. As with *The Plague of Doves, Almanac* comprises an archive that intersperses seemingly disparate narratives, enabling the reader to understand the connections between them. However, while Erdrich's novel highlighted alternative repositories of knowledge that are excluded from the Western archive, *Almanac* refutes the colonial narrative that denied the existence of Indigenous forms of writing. The ancient Mayan almanac at the heart of the text, filled with events and prophecies, asserts the significance of pre-colonial Indigenous written traditions. The twins Lecha and Zeta are responsible for preserving and contributing to the fourth surviving Mayan codex, which has been passed down to them by their grandmother Yoeme and previous generations of ancestors. Acts of archiving are positioned as transgenerational acts of resistance, through the twins' work to transcribe the notebooks. In carrying out acts of notetaking, they are continuing the mnemonic work begun by their ancestors. This physical act of transfer is an act of resistance in itself, a dramatization of the trans-generational transfer of cultural memory that is central to Indigenous survivance. Through this work,

Lecha and Zeta continue an ancient tradition to bring about Indigenous futurity. In this way, contemporary forms of Indigenous writing-as-resistance are situated within a much longer continuum, as a practice that has been carried out over centuries. Silko thus evokes an understanding of Indigenous resistance as a form of continuity. This cross-temporal conceptualization coheres with Simpson's understanding of Indigenous resistance, which is situated firmly in response to Indigenous (pre- and postcolonial) pasts, as well as futurity. Simpson writes: "My ancestors struggled, sacrificed and fought much worse than I have to get me here, and I have the same responsibility to my future relations" (*As We Have Always Done,* 6). Simpson draws on the Nishnaabeg word kobade to communicate this, a word that means "a link in a chain – a link in the chain between generations, between nations, between states of being, between individuals" (8). Like Simpson, Silko understands Indigenous resistance as occurring on a cross-temporal and trans-generational scale. In continuing the work of their ancestors for future generations, Lecha and Zeta are two such links. By framing Indigenous resistance in this way, *Almanac* emphasises the dynamic relationality between generations past and future.

Throughout the novel, memory is framed as a disruptive force regardless of one's cultural heritage. Clinton, an African American war veteran with Cherokee ancestry, observes that the "powers who controlled the United States didn't want the people to know their history. If the people knew their history, they would realise they must rise up" (431). The suggestion here is that narratives have a re-animating effect: that knowledge of their histories would elevate oppressed peoples. Their continued suppression is dependent on preventing such narratives from being passed down across generations and shared amongst others, in a way that speaks to Vizenor's understanding of survivance. *Almanac,* as an archive of multidirectional memory, incorporates Indigenous stories of resistance alongside narratives of African slavery and the experiences of Euroamerican settlers of low socio-economic status. By connecting Indigenous narratives with the experiences of other dispossessed and marginalised groups, Silko moves beyond narrow racial, cultural or class-based modes of identification. Of particular emphasis is the generative potential of African American and Native American solidarities. This is invoked from the beginning, through the assertion "[s]ixty million Native Americans died between 1500 and 1600", which recalls Morrison's *Beloved* published four years earlier in 1987 (15).[96] The figure employed by Silko echoes Morrison's dedication to the "[s]ixty Million and more" Africans that are estimated to have

[96] With an estimated 56 million Indigenous deaths between the time of European arrival in 1492 and 1600, the reduction in population impacted the earth system, as subsequent reforestation contributed towards an atmospheric drop in carbon levels (Koch et al., 2019). Because of this, many scientists argue that the beginning of the epoch termed the Anthropocene should be dated 1610, as the date that human activity first impacted the earth's climate. For further reading see Lewis and Maslin (2015).

died during the trans-Atlantic slave trade.[97] This intertextual reference exemplifies multidirectional memory, as Silko places the memory of African American suffering into dialogue with Native American genocide. The impulse of this reference is developed through the Indigenous and African American solidarities that are imagined in the novel, which are rooted in a recognition of shared experiences of subjugation through the history of settler colonialism in the United States. *Almanac* foregrounds the knowledge that the foundation of the United States was reliant on the genocide of Indigenous peoples and the indentured labour of Africans. Through Yoeme's narrative of how the cottonwood trees came to surround Lecha and Zeta's childhood home, *Almanac* frames the land and the (African and Indigenous) body as two loci of settler colonial intervention. Accordingly, this recognition of shared experiences invokes the potential for solidarity. Yet, Silko also recovers the neglected history of Cherokee slaveholders and their mixed-race descendants, exploring the fraught intersections of these histories. The inclusion of Clinton, who is African American with Cherokee heritage, is notable in the context of the erasure that black Native Americans experience in dominant cultural narratives (even those produced by Indigenous writers). Silko's novel, then, also represents some of the more problematic elements of Indigenous history, invoking episodes of colonial violence in which Indigenous nations were implicated.[98] Through its portrayal of black Natives and Indigenous peoples from Latin America, *Almanac* centres complex Indigenous identities that are frequently excluded from mainstream notions of indigeneity. As Penelope M. Kelsey writes, the segments of the novel set south of the Mexico-United States border "provide context for the larger ideation of Indigeneity in the Americas", which "differs significantly" in Central and South American spaces (113). Silko thus refuses colonial forms of categorization through rejecting a repressive narrative of authenticity.

Clinton's narrative further connects the history of African American slavery in America with the contemporary socio-economic oppressions of the capitalist world-system:

> Clinton believed it was important for the people to understand that all around them lay human slavery, although most recently it had been called by other names […] One kind of slavery had often been traded for another slavery as bad or worse. Slaves

[97] It has been suggested that Morrison's dedication itself evokes the 'six million' of the Holocaust, which adds a third dimension to the collection of memories that are being recalled. For further reading, see "'I made the ink": Identity, Complicity, 60 Million, and More' (Mandel).

[98] Selected Native American tribal nations owned African slaves until the United States civil war (1861-5). This was particularly common amongst the nations known as the 'Five Civilized Tribes', which included the Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, Seminole and Creek (Muscogee).

> of past centuries had shelter and food. Yet today in the United States, so-called 'free' men, women, and children slept under cardboard on the street (411-2).

Here, Silko employs the memory of African American slavery to consider other connected forms of oppression. While race informs the ways in which certain bodies are rendered disposable under capitalism, Silko emphasises that this process of exclusion is not limited to those who are racialised. The figures to which Clinton refers are "wasted lives" under global capitalism: those humans marked as "excessive" and "redundant" (Bauman, 5). By understanding the epidemic of homelessness in the contemporary United States in relation to histories of African American slavery, Silko asserts the always entwined forms of modernity/coloniality.

Almanac not only highlights the interconnected experiences of modernity/coloniality between different groups in the same geopolitical space but, through drawing a direct connection between the Indigenous struggles in the Americas and conditions in Africa, foregrounds the globally interconnected nature of coloniality by highlighting mirrored conditions of precarity. Clinton observes: "The ordinary people, the citizens in Africa, had the same problems with government politicians as the people had in the United States. The people worked day and night to pay taxes, but still found themselves hungry and homeless" (411). Accordingly, the novel demonstrates the need for parallel resistance movements that do not challenge such structures in isolation, but that work together in a planetary, dialogic resistance that moves beyond nationalist paradigms. As Shari M. Huhndorf notes, *Almanac* "departs from nationalist novels by positioning transnational alliances as the most powerful of anticolonial endeavours" (171). This should be understood as a relational ethic, situated within the historic context of what Lakota historian Nick Estes calls "radical Indigenous internationalism" – a tradition through which Indigenous peoples in the Americas have historically sought "to make relatives […] with those they saw as different, imagining themselves as part of Third World struggles and ideologies, and entirely renouncing the imperialism and exceptionalism of the First World (while still living in it)" (*Our History is the Future,* 204). In highlighting the entangled conditions of precarity under global capitalism, Silko advances a holistic frame of analysis that spans boundaries of geography, race, culture and class. Therefore, while Arnold Krupat and Michael A. Elliott's analysis recognises that "*Almanac* elaborates a commitment to a transnational solidarity that is not based on blood", their consideration of this as "a pan-Americanism" fails to appreciate the scale at which *Almanac's* invocation of solidarity occurs (139). Rather, the novel understands resistance on a *planetary* scale, as it connects people from Africa to the Americas, as well as looking beyond humanistic solidarities to the non-human.

In Cheyfitz's analysis of the novel, he argues that Weasel Tail, the "lawyer-poet" and "Lakota healer and visionary" can be read as representative of Silko herself (Silko, 716).[99] Cheyfitz understands Weasel Tail (and Silko) as espousing a transnational politics of resistance. However, he highlights the necessity of grounding this approach by dismantling locally-specific colonial institutions – an understanding that the novel is aware of, Cheyfitz argues. Pointing to Weasel Tail's engagement with Federal Indian law, Cheyfitz notes:

> Although Wilson Weasel Tail's ultimate cry is transnational, a cry for all the dispossessed (Indians, African Americans, and the poor across races and ethnicities, that is, beyond identity politics) 'to take back the Americas!' (724), he necessarily grounds that cry […] in nationalist terms – in both the Native (tribal or indigenous) and the nation-state sense. […] This transnational cry must be grounded in the national because revolutions can only take place in specific locales by overturning specific institutions (*Columbia Guide*, 101).

Following Cheyfitz, and considering the discussion of decolonization at the outset of this thesis, the importance of locally-specific experiences and aims in decolonization efforts cannot be overlooked. Subaltern cosmopolitanism, too, must be grounded in local socio-political contexts, as well as in radical relation to specific environmental spaces. Silko, through the character Weasel Tail, frames Federal Indian law as a target for decolonial efforts. Yet, her engagement with transnational solidarities occurs on a much larger scale and in more generic terms. As I show, the novel's engagement with Africa is limited due to its failure to engage with the local specificities of African (de)colonial contexts.

The final section, "One World, Many Tribes", sees the Indigenous People's Army forming allegiances with other dispossessed peoples, including across Africa (707). Notably, the South African anti-apartheid movement directly inspires and materially supports the Indigenous revolution across the Americas: "After five hundred years of colonialism, and the terrible bloodbath in South Africa, the African tribal people had retaken Africa. Now the Hopi had received not only encouragement but financial aid from African nations sympathetic to the Hopi's cause" (616). While Silko frames transnational alliances as fundamental to the success of the decolonial struggle, the impact of this is limited due to a flattening of differences in the service of creating a united movement. The inclusion of

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[99] As Cheyfitz observes in *The Columbia Guide to American Indian Literatures of the United States Since 1945*, Silko herself briefly studied at law school before dropping out, like Weasel Tail, to focus on her writing as a way to "set people free" (Silko, 713). Like Weasel Tail, Silko understands her artistic work as political.

Africa, as Huhndorf has noted, is problematic for its homogeneity: "astonishingly, Africa here is represented as a singular entity" (159). In addition to failing to distinguish between different national contexts, cultures or struggles, Silko's depiction of Africa as an exemplary *post*-colonial continent fails to account for the ongoing legacies of coloniality that continue to structure many African states, including post-apartheid South Africa.[100] Published in 1991, before the end of apartheid and around the time of Mandela's release, Silko's rendering of South Africa looks ahead to an anticipated future. Yet, the idealised tone with which this is envisioned is at odds with the rest of the novel. Within Silko's speculative future, South Africa – along with the rest of the African continent – has been liberated and its people are now supporting other decolonial movements around the world. And yet, reading the novel today, this utopian depiction sits uncomfortably with the realities of post-apartheid South Africa.

In a 1985 interview with Laura Coltelli, Silko comments on the intersections between Native American experiences of settler colonial violence and the conditions of apartheid in South Africa:

> It's kind of heartbreaking, in South Africa, some of the interviews with South African blacks and colored people, these old folks who are in their sixties. My heart breaks. I think about them like the old folks that were around at Wounded Knee, and when that stuff was going on […] and I would say that is not a unique or peculiar experience (Coltelli, 63-4).

We can understand Silko's engagement with Africa in *Almanac* in relation to her reflections on the similarities across Native American and South African experiences of colonial violence. Silko channels her affective response to apartheid in the narrative, through what is represented as a productive enactment of solidarity. However, the homogenising and idealistic depiction of a *post*-colonial South Africa is an example of the potential limitations of subaltern cosmopolitan movements, where not enough space is created for contexts to be engaged with fully in their own terms. This is particularly apparent as we read the text alongside *Quiet Violence*, a novel which reveals the ongoing conditions of coloniality in post-apartheid South Africa. Duiker's text, as we shall see, demonstrates some of the failures of the earlier anti-apartheid movement, highlighting the urgent decolonial work that still needs to be done.

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[100] Here, as elsewhere in this thesis, I use the hyphenated post-colonial to refer to the time period after colonialism formally ended.

Post-apartheid Coloniality and the Limits of Ethnocentric Solidarities

In Duiker's rendering of South Africa, the need for decolonization still exists though apartheid has formally ended. Writing almost a decade after the ANC were elected into power, Duiker attests to the ongoing material and metaphysical structures of coloniality that the anti-apartheid movement failed to eradicate, through narratives that register the systemic violence experienced by black and coloured South Africans. Published a decade after *Almanac*, we can imagine *Quiet Violence*, then, as 'speaking back' to Silko's novel, which was published on the cusp of South African liberation. Through first person narratives, Duiker troubles an overly simplistic notion of post-coloniality, even as his vision of cosmopolitan pan-African solidarity evokes a similar ethic of cross-cultural relationality. Even though Duiker observes that post-apartheid South African culture has "moved away from protest art and struggle poetry", he highlights what he sees as the ethical imperative for authors to use their art as a way to challenge ongoing forms of injustice ('The Streets', 9). In an article published in the *Rhodes Journalism Review*, Duiker articulates a belief in the need for art to be politically engaged: "Perhaps this is where art has its place today. […] let us not forget, that the role of the artist, the musician, the poet, the writer is to wander the streets, to keep being ever wakeful to notice and to voice what is often easier to push out of sight and out of mind" ('The Streets', 9). In interviews, Silko has spoken of a similar belief as she understands her writing to be "the most effective political statement" that she can make (Coltelli, 63).

As I have shown throughout this thesis, ongoing conditions of coloniality frequently take shape in South Africa in socio-economic terms, through which the hierarchies of apartheid are reproduced. A politics of recognition, epitomised by the TRC, allowed the colonial status quo to be largely maintained, particularly in terms of wealth and land ownership. However, as discussed in the previous chapter, since 1994 there has developed a small, non-white elite class that benefit materially from colonial legacies. In exploring this widening wealth gap, Duiker's text is interested in examining the intersecting oppressions of race, class, gender and sexuality to understand which populations have been left behind. In doing so, it challenges a societal bias for spectacular, event-based trauma, by bearing witness to the various forms of quiet violence that are associated with fast capitalism and systemic inequality. The extreme inequality in the country is shown through Tshepo's obscenely wealthy patrons when he is working as an escort, to the absolute poverty of those forgotten by the system. The narratives foreground the extent to which, following the shifting hierarchies of the transition, coloured and immigrant communities have to a certain extent replaced the black population to become the new underclass of South Africa. This expansive focus is made possible through the form of the novel, which is comprised of dozens of

narratives from diverse perspectives.[101] The heterogeneity of the South African population is reflected through the different narrative voices, which vary in their uses of language. Though all are written in English, they are differently inflected by slang, accent, and the untranslated use of other languages (including Afrikaans). Duiker's novel, like *Almanac*, forms a multidirectional archive of memory. Its structure can be understood as informed by the relational logic of ubuntu which, as discussed in the introduction to this thesis, is integral to many African cultures. The cultural practice of ubuntu storytelling, described by Devi Dee Mucina, follows the logic of the Ngoni saying: "The story of one cannot be told without unfolding the story of many" (Mucina, 1). The form of Duiker's novel here operates as a space through which to facilitate ubuntu storytelling, as it creates space for heterogenous experiences and expressions of humanity to be shared and registered. This act of registering occurs through the process of reading itself, actively engaging the reader in the process of ubuntu.

As with *Almanac, Quiet Violence* foregrounds the inseparability of environmental justice from decolonization, suggesting that environmental remediation is only possible through the undoing of colonial logic. However, the fact that the primary aim of the decolonial movement in *Quiet Violence* is not the return of land but the discovery of alternative ways of being is a point of distinction between the two texts. Though an integral component of the revolution in *Almanac* is onto-epistemological resurgence, Silko never loses focus of the issue of land, emphasised by the alternative cartographical rendering of the Americas printed at the beginning of the book. Yet, the two visions of decolonial futurity overlap through their emphasis on relationality, which informs the transcultural solidarities at the centre of the novels. The movement that Tshepo joins at the end of *Quiet Violence* is similarly a subaltern cosmopolitan project. Though its scope is primarily African, it consists of people from diverse ethnic, national and cultural backgrounds, many of whom have immigrated to South Africa looking for work. As migrants, the very presence of these communities in Johannesburg and Cape Town is a result of the combined and uneven development of the capitalist world-system. Tshepo's Senegalese, Congolese, and Nigerian neighbours that are "trying to find a home in our country" are depicted to "work hard and do jobs that ordinary South Africans consider beneath them" (454). By joining with the migrants to build a different future, Tshepo demonstrates what Santos understands as a fundamental aspect of counter-hegemonic globalization, that is: "the awareness of the new opportunities for transnational creativity and solidarity created by the intensification of global interactions" (Santos 180). In this way, the contemporary urban spaces of

[101] The character Mmbatho is Tshepo's closest friend and the only female narrator.

Johannesburg and Cape Town are contemporary contact zones, which (like the colonial contact zone) bring groups into contact with one another that may have seldom interacted in the past. While Duiker's narrative depicts the tense and even violent ramifications of migration processes, it also proposes an alternative way of relating to others that is rooted in reciprocity and exchange.

Like *Almanac, Quiet Violence* espouses the need to share diverse histories and cultures, for solidarity beyond cultural or racial borders, and the urgency of resistance in the face of capitalist and colonial violence. Just as Clinton sees those "screaming 'Black only! Africa only!'" as "fanatics or extremists", Tshepo rejects modes of resistance that are rooted in a narrow nationalism or ethnocentrism (Silko, 742). Instead, he understands that all people have knowledge to offer to the collective project of building "a new way of life" that "depends on everyone working together" (455). The people Tshepo meets offer him, "blueprints for survival, for building a new civilisation"; they tell him there "are better ways […] capitalism is not the only way." *Quiet Violence's* vision of a pan-African decolonial movement transcends race, culture and nationality, as Tshepo asserts:

> I can't follow the whites, they are heading for the abyss with stupid pride. The coloureds are waiting for their own coloured messiah […] And the new blacks are too angry and grab everything for themselves […] So I follow the Africans, the enlightened ones, the elusive ones who see into my being and communicate with subtle hints and gestures (437-8).

By emphasising African heritage over racial modes of identification, Tshepo disavows a politics based on ideas of nationalism and primacy. The novel highlights the danger posed by a South African nationalist ideology that has, post-apartheid, mutated to take the form of lethal anti-immigrant hostility targeting other Africans: those that "black South Africans call 'makwere-kwere' with derogatory and defiant arrogance" (454). As Samuelson observes, the African migrants are dehumanised by the black population through this "uncanny reiteration of the Dutch naming of their Khoikhoi hosts as 'Hottentots' (mimicking what the Dutch perceived as their animalistic gibberish)" classifies "African immigrants and migrants in South Africa today […] as ones who have no language, and thus no presence within the networks of human sociality that the city represents" ('The City beyond the Border', 252). Bearing witness to the cycles of violence directed at immigrants, as well as poor black and coloured communities, *Quiet Violence* registers the ways that the shifting form of coloniality reproduces inequalities in South Africa.

Duiker's reproach of nationalism echoes Fanon, who suggests that national consciousness should not be the endpoint of anti-colonial mobilization. Rather, once national consciousness is reached, Fanon argues that "we must rapidly switch from a national consciousness to a social and political consciousness" (142). While nationalism may have been necessary to the success of the anti-apartheid movement, as an ideology it is entangled with coloniality. As Quijano notes, "the social classification of the world's population around the idea of race" is "one of the fundamental axes" of coloniality (533). This formulation includes the racialization of categories, such as nationalities, that previously "indicated only geographic origin or country of origin" (Quijano, 533). Accordingly, Tshepo suggests that South Africans must look beyond nation to planet in order to move forwards with the decolonial process. In the final pages of the novel, Tshepo envisages a future that exceeds these modes of categorization, towards global scales of connection. He muses, "[p]erhaps the future of mankind lies in each other, not in separate continents with separate people […] our differences are merging" (456). By invoking a future that moves beyond racial, cultural and national borders, *Quiet Violence* disavows the colonial logic that works to define and divide through processes of categorization. This approach understands the relationality between bodies, cultures, and spaces as dynamic and constantly changing. As Duiker envisages the "differences" between people of different continents "merging", he refutes these strict processes of definition by envisaging networks of relationality not structured by fixed boundaries of categorization.

Yet, it is important to note that *Quiet Violence* does not portray an idyllic vision of subaltern cosmopolitanism. This is clear from Tshepo's dysfunctional relationship with his coloured roommate Chris, which stems largely from their differential experiences of systemic violence in South Africa. As a middle-class, university-educated black man, Tshepo comes from a more privileged position. Further, Tshepo's experiences as a male escort attend to the ways in which coloniality – particularly, the racialised and misogynistic fetishization and commodification of sex, and the internalization of gendered and racialised narratives – have permeated sexual relations and the politics of desire across different postcolonial spaces. This is framed as a barrier to formations of solidarity in the encounter that Tshepo has with Arthur, an African American client:

> 'I've never had a real African man. So what tribe are you from?' he says, still sipping his drinks. I hate that question. It's like asking what's your breed.
> 'Xhosa.' I know he won't be able to pronounce it. Americans and their quaint ideas of Africa, I say to myself, irritated by the condescending tone of his voice' (315).

Arthur's exoticised fetishization of African masculinity during this exchange creates a distance between the two characters who, ostensibly, might be read as otherwise 'natural' allies. This is particularly notable considering the widely documented historic expressions of African American and South African solidarity during the anti-apartheid era, and the way that their struggles continue to be linked in contemporary cultural production. Instead, the power dynamic of Arthur and Tshepo's interaction is uneven, largely due to Arthur's Western citizenship and financial security (perceived by Tshepo as extravagance). Arthur's privileged status and Euroamerican mindset is epitomised by his belief in a developmental narrative of progress, seeing South Africa, and Africa more broadly, as being "way behind" the rest of the world (317). While Arthur laments the lack of connection he has to his homeland, he fails to register the relative privilege that he has as an African American moving through South Africa. Though he is black, Arthur's position as is one of absolute privilege compared to the African immigrants who are the targets of xenophobic abuse. Arthur and Tshepo's interaction troubles simplistic arguments for solidarity based on race, highlighting the need for an intersectional approach that attends to other forms of privilege. As Tshepo observes, "[t]o be black in America is different than being black in Africa" (318).

Tshepo's uneasy reaction to Arthur's articulation of African American trauma is suggestive of the limitations of multidirectional memory. Following Arthur's admission, Tshepo muses on the affective failure of the exchange:

> I have never understood that about African Americans […] Every time they speak about slavery, you'd think that it was only yesterday. There is still the grief and pain. The humiliation that they suffered, it has branded their memory. Perhaps as a free-born African whose ancestors were also free, I don't appreciate enough their experience. I can't even compare it with apartheid. Slavery just conjures up the worst images of human imagination (317-8).

While Tshepo recognises the brutality of slavery and, with it, his own limitations that prevent him from having an empathetic response, this encounter suggests that a politics of solidarity rooted in multidirectional memory is not always possible. Instead, any expressions of solidarity are dependent on the specificities of the contexts at work – taking into account present inequalities and ongoing material conditions of oppression. Rather than an ally, Tshepo perceives Arthur to be just one of many "opportunists who want to make a quick buck and fuck off back to their country with lots of money" (317). Through this interaction, *Quiet Violence* highlights the different levels of exploitation at work in cross-cultural exchanges, even those that are sexual in nature. Instead, Tshepo has more empathy with

Native Americans and their experiences of dispossession under settler colonialism. Responding to Arthur's complaint that he feels like a "guest in [his] own country", Tshepo retorts: "the same can be said about Native Americans and if anyone should lay claim to America it's them. But they are also in the minority. What about their pain?" (318).

While cultural memory occupies an integral role in *Almanac* and is portrayed as an essential component of Indigenous resistance, memory holds a more liminal place in *Quiet Violence*. Cultural memory is notable here for its absences. Colonialism, apartheid and capitalism have irrevocably disrupted memory and knowledge transfer practices, frequently dislocating urban South African communities from sources of cultural knowledge. This depiction is particularly interesting in the context of the wider South African post-apartheid literary canon, which is frequently preoccupied with the mediation of collective memory. As Graham notes, the "national project of remapping collective memory", perhaps most clearly characterised by the TRC process, is also "at work in post-apartheid literature" (*South African Literature*, 4). Much of this, Graham observes, explores "the psychological challenges of trying to memorialize and preserve the traumatic past without freezing it into ossified formulae that may be easily forgotten precisely because they become so familiar". While Duiker's novel is deeply concerned with the psychological difficulties of coming to terms with painful pasts, this is located firmly in relation to individual trauma. Though trauma is experienced on a large scale – each character that narrates a section of the novel shares some type of traumatic experience – this is dealt with at a personal level. Tshepo's own journey is the best example of this. His character arc is built around his attempts to recover from past trauma – specifically, the death of his mother and his experience of being gang raped by her killers. The novel does not situate these crimes in relation to national or collective experiences, such as apartheid. Instead, they symbolise the senseless brutality and cycles of violence that characterise urban black life in South Africa under modernity. Furthermore, with the exception of the Rastafarian community, the black population in the novel has few cultural, tribal, or spiritual traditions. In this, there is a clear distinction between the urban, Cape Town communities depicted in *Quiet Violence* and the rural village community of Qolorha in Mda's *The Heart of Redness*. The youth in Cape Town are beholden to an all-encompassing, consumer capitalist culture that has all but replaced any prior modes of cultural belonging. This depiction evokes the "crisis of historicity" that Jameson argues is a feature of the postmodern (cited in Graham, 3) and which Graham argues exerts "a general amnesiac effect" (2). Duiker's novel situates this cultural amnesia in relation to the entwined structures of neoliberal capitalism and coloniality, the latter of which is emphasised as a disruptive force characterised by continuous acts of ontological and epistemological violence. The narratives of Tshepo and his friend Mmbatho are framed around their need to

recover that which has been lost to them due to the rupturing effects of coloniality/modernity. Their attempts to reconnect with an African cultural heritage set them apart from others in their community.

The relative absence of cultural memory in *Quiet Violence* diverges from *Almanac,* which foregrounds the collective work of remembering and retelling that is necessary to the survival of Indigenous communities. Though *Almanac* includes traumatic, collective memories of colonialism, it also foregrounds memories of resilience, as well as pre-colonial traditions and prophecies. These memories are transferred through the physical passing down of the notebooks themselves, as well as in the transgenerational memory of the Laguna and Yaqui peoples preserved through the oral tradition. The comparative scarcity in *Quiet Violence* is a consequence of the disruption caused by colonial and capitalist forms of development, which together ruptured modes of connections between people, places, and environments. In Tshepo's conversations as he traverses the city, Duiker creates an atmosphere of loss and bewilderment as Tshepo desperately attempts to locate himself within a collective group identity, ranging from Rastafarians to the LGBTQ+ community. He eventually achieves this through the formation of a pan-African, queer brotherhood.[102] However, the refusal to represent an enduring collectivised form of memory marks a distinct shift away from the cultural preoccupation with memory that characterises much literature of the South African transition. As such, Duiker's novel disavows a politics of recognition that is rooted in a national memory culture. Instead, the possibility of a future free from these divisions is offered through the recovery of African onto-epistemologies. Such a recovery, the novel suggests, involves the active reformulation of modes of being in the world, crucially reorienting the self in relation to other beings, both human and non-human others. This is not to say that the novel disavows the relational power of storytelling: Tshepo's journeys across Cape Town are scattered with expansive stories of the people he meets, which provide productive avenues for connection and exchange. However, the narrative also emphasises that there are forms of relationality beyond storytelling and, particularly, beyond *anthropocentric* conceptions of storytelling. This is particularly vital to grasp in the context of non-human relationality, which I will discuss in the penultimate section, to the extent that storytelling as it is commonly conceived is quintessentially 'human'. If we understand the South African emphasis on collective memory during the transition to be a reinscription of distinctly human-centred worldviews, *Quiet Violence's* emphasis on the planetary is a refusal of this anthropocentrism as much as it is a refusal of nation.

[102] Following its dominant usage in queer theory, the term queer is used here as an umbrella term to refer to those who identify as belonging to the LGBTQ+ community.

Queer and Feminist Futures

While the 1996 South African constitution has been described as the "most egalitarian gender, sex, and family jurisprudence ever attempted," it is notable that LGBTQ+ people in South Africa still experience significant persecution (Stacey and Meadow, 175). As Judith Stacey and Tey Meadow observe, "an entrenched culture of patriarchal heterosexual domination and virulent homophobia exact severe, sometimes deadly consequences against many who seek to exercise these rights", with the effect that "these *de jure* rights lie beyond the reach of the vast majority of its citizens" (175). This intolerance is frequently racialised, tied up in widely held beliefs that homosexuality is 'unAfrican'. In addition, queer people of colour continue to experience racism from white queer communities, as Tshepo finds upon visiting a gay bar in Cape Town. By presenting these ongoing tensions, Duiker disrupts the image of the rainbow nation, while also imagining a mode of futurism that centres queer men in South Africa's, and more broadly Africa's, future. The queer relations of *Quiet Violence* explicitly challenge what Carolin and Frenkel observe as "the cultural invisibility of black practitioners of same-sex intimacies in South Africa", as well as the narrative that homosexuality is somehow "unAfrican" (Carolin and Frenkel, 37-8). Tshepo refutes this belief, suggesting that, before the imposition of colonial worldviews, African cultures had a more fluid understanding of gender and sexuality:

> You know the argument – it's very unafrican. It's a lot of crap. In my experience that kind of thinking comes from urbanised blacks, people who've watered down the real origins of our culture and mixed it with Anglo-Saxon notions of the Bible. It's stupid to even suggest that homosexuality and lesbianism are foreign to black culture. Long ago, long before whites, people were aware of the blurs (Duiker, 250).

Here, Tshepo understands homophobic attitudes as a consequence of colonial legacies, situated particularly in response to the spread of Christianity across Africa. The Dutch imported Christianity to South Africa through the establishment of the first European Colony at the Cape. With it came the punishment of homosexual practices, as the Dutch punished homosexuality in South Africa aggressively throughout the eighteenth century. These enforced social norms then continued under British rule over the course of the nineteenth century.[103] Though *Quiet Violence* doesn't detail specific cultural traditions, it gestures to histories of sexual fluidity and non-heteronormative relations that span African

[103] The British continued to outlaw homosexual practices but were allegedly less aggressive in their prosecution of such cases. See Epprecht for further discussion of the Dutch and British colonial treatment of homosexual relations in South Africa (pp. 50-83).

tribal cultures and geopolitical contexts. Implicit within the recovery of these histories is the understanding that colonialism influenced sexual norms. Queer theorist Scott Morgenson uses the term "settler sexuality" to understand the process of imposition that occurs in settler colonial contexts: "A white national heteronormativity [and increasingly also homonormativity] that regulates Indigenous sexuality and gender by supplanting them with the sexual modernity of settler subjects (106). Though Morgenson is writing primarily about a North American context, his critique of settler sexuality pertains to South Africa and illuminates Duiker's novel.

Histories of divergences within pre-colonial African sexualities are well documented. Mark Epprecht's *Hungochani* provides us with a socio-historic context through which to understand Duiker's evocation of pre-colonial sexual fluidity. In this work, Epprecht disavows the "stereotype of a heterosexually pure Africa" by evoking wide-ranging examples of male-male intimacy in South Africa during nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, citing various cultural contexts including Khoi, Shangaan, Zulu and Xhosa (Epprecht 10). Furthermore, Epprecht argues that the "claim that same-sex sexual behavior is un-African" in fact "originated in the West rather than Africa itself" (7), concluding that the notion of a 'pure' African (sexual) culture was an exoticised narrative of colonial invention. Epprecht does not suggest that it was common practice for men to identify as homosexual in a way that subverted heteronormative social relations, but he notes that fluidity pertaining to sexual and other forms of intimate relations was an accepted part of life amongst many African tribal cultures. Duiker's attentiveness to "the blurs" of sexual fluidity manifests in Tshepo's refusal to be situated within an explicitly hetero- or homo-normative framework. Though the narrative foregrounds same-sex relations, Tshepo does not belong to any clearly defined sexual category.[104] As well as sexuality, the novel also disrupts gender norms, through Tshepo's shifting relationship with his own gender identity. This is emphasised most clearly when Tshepo believes he is menstruating, while a patient at Valkenberg mental facility. Accordingly, the novel avoids adhering to defined boundaries of sexuality and gender established through the now-globalised, Western paradigm. Instead, it evokes a fluid approach that, if we follow Epprecht, characterises traditional African cultures.

Through its celebration of queer, polyamorous connections the novel's rejection of monogamous relations is particularly significant. TallBear understands heteronormative monogamy as an aspect of settler society that has historically been forced onto Indigenous peoples. She argues that the social construct of monogamy was historically entwined with "the appropriation of Indigenous collectively held land and its division into individual

[104] Tshepo also has sexual encounters with women over the course of the novel, though they are not positioned to be transformative.

allotments to be held privately" (TallBear, 'Yes, Your Pleasure!'). As such, normative forms of romantic relationships (such as sex and/or marriage) correspond to the facilitation of "private property holding in the US and Canada". While the processes of African dispossession carried out by European settler societies in South Africa operated differently to the United States, settlers similarly imposed heteronormative monogamous marriage relations upon (traditionally polygamous) African societies that had different understandings of land ownership. Traditional African cultures often involved fluid sexual and non-monogamous relations, both inside and outside of marriage, as well as collective modes of land inhabitation rather than a Western model of property ownership.[105] This tells us that sexuality and the types of sexuality that are normatively produced through capitalist modernity inform the ways that we engage with land. An enforced practice of heterosexual monogamy, then, is driven by a patriarchal anthropocentricism based upon notions of property and ownership that dictate our relations with non-human (as well as human) others. A non-monogamous mode of queer relationality is significant in *Quiet Violence* because it is not based on an understanding of individual property ownership. Instead, it is about a collective mode of being through the co-habitation of spaces and reliance on others that resonates with historical African social structures. We can therefore understand the Johannesburg community within which Tshepo locates himself at the end of the novel in these terms.

Duiker articulates this position by evoking similar beliefs of other pre-colonial societies, including Native American. Sebastian, an Afrikaans employee at the massage parlour, recalls "the Native Americans and the berdache thing, which was usually a gay man who was honoured with the privilege of being like a village shaman, a person who looked after the children, gave advice, saw things that people didn't because they took them for granted" (255). Sebastian's reference to the "berdache" evokes the important place that two-spirit people hold within Native American societies. Berdache is an (outdated) anthropological term for two-spirit: the preferred term among many Native American cultures that names individuals who embody a third gender, or a mixture of feminine and masculine spirits. Two-spirit people traditionally occupy specific spiritual roles within their societies. Cheryl Stobie observes that Tshepo's own development mimics the depiction of the berdache, as by the end of the story Tshepo has "become a shaman who works in a children's home, nurturing the future and passing on wisdom" (84). The framing of Tshepo as two-spirit is further suggested, I argue, through the way that he sees "things that [other] people didn't because they took them for granted", after his decolonial awakening (255).

[105] This is with the exception of the Zulu who punished adultery harshly; others were more tolerant. For further reading see 'The Myths of Polygamy' (Delius and Glaser, 2004).

Specifically, Tshepo becomes attuned to the animacy of the non-human, as I will discuss in the next section of this chapter. The reframing of sexuality in comparative pre-colonial terms is integral to the novel's broader vision of decolonial futurity. The evocation of Native American cultural beliefs creates a connection across colonised societies that is rooted in a shared inherent fluidity and resistance to colonial forms of categorization. It also exemplifies the way that Duiker registers coloniality as a global occurrence, though with locally specific effects, moving beyond a pan-African vision of cross-cultural exchange. In both Silko and Duiker's novels, then, there is a shared understanding of the disruption caused by colonialism to pre-existing social structures and an attempt to move beyond these frameworks, through an engagement with other colonised societies.

While the decolonial movement that grows at the end of *Quiet Violence* is framed around queerness, it is notable that it figures here as fundamentally masculine. Nasuib, who guides Tshepo at the novel's close, explicitly instructs him to "[f]orget about women" (445). Instead, Tshepo must focus on the "many men" he will meet in Johannesburg, who "will all have secret gifts" to help him build a more egalitarian future. Such exchanges are based on a queer mode of relationality, which fundamentally differs from the other intimate masculine relationships that Tshepo has through his work as an escort, many of which are marked by the uneven power dynamics of race, class, or nationality. The men that Tshepo encounters "all go about the quiet business of telling me their secrets, sharing their wisdom" (455). While often these encounters are of a sexual nature, he suggests that "it is not [about] making love" (445). Instead, it is "a process of communicating. I read things in his breath, his thrusts, the way he holds me" (445). By distinguishing these relations from Tshepo's other encounters with men, Duiker's treatment of sexuality "reveals a deep destabilization of hegemonic discourses that designate same-sex intimacies within a polarized narrow ambit, suggesting a complexity of experience and subjectivity that is often denied by mainstream public cultures" (Carolin and Frenkel, 44). The complex understanding of male-male intimacy depicted in *Quiet Violence* is situated in relation to decolonization, as this form of relating is only possible now that Tshepo is attuned to alternative ontological and epistemological modes. Tshepo's journey evokes the possibility of decolonial futurity through his discovery of new ways of relating to others that facilitates embodied and affective forms of knowledge transfer.

With Tshepo's recovery, *Quiet Violence* concludes with the potential of queer futurity. In this, it departs from the dominant portrayal of queer characters in South African literature. Following Andrew Van der Vlies, many works of post-apartheid writing that include queer figures "invoke [their] complicated relationships to genealogy and futurity" (11). Drawing on Gordimer's 2012 novel *No Time Like the Present,* Van der Vlies observes an unease "with the non-reproductive nature of gay sexuality" that appears across South African literary works

(11). Duiker's novel, however, explicitly rejects the heteronormative politics of "reproductive futurism" that characterises much South African literature (Edelman, 2). Literary critic Lee Edelman uses this term to understand how the "absolute privilege of heteronormativity" is framed as the "organizing principle of communal relations" and the way in which "the possibility of a queer resistance" to this is rendered "unthinkable" and cast "outside the political domain" (2). The figure of the child is key to Edelman, which he understands to be the "linchpin of our universal politics of 'reproductive futurism'" (202). Transposing this analysis to *Quiet Violence,* Edelman's emphasis on the image of the child is revealing. While Tshepo leaves for Johannesburg, Mmbatho, Tshepo's best friend and the only female narrator, becomes pregnant and is left behind in Cape Town. Through Mmbatho's pregnancy – and her child, conceived with her German lover Arne – Duiker's narrative contributes to a series of male-authored South African novels from the post-apartheid period that each hold up the (frequently mixed race) child as a symbol of the country's future. Lucy's child in Coetzee's *Disgrace* (1999) is an example of this, as is Qukezwa and Camagu's son in *The Heart of Redness* by Mda. Such allegorical narratives play into notions of the innocent child as the symbol for national healing, reconciliation and futurity by physically inscribing a heteronormative national narrative onto the female body. While Edelman does not discuss race at length – indeed, this is one of the frequent critiques of his work – using his analysis in a South African context requires an attentiveness to the dynamics of race. In South African narratives, reproductive futurism frequently operates to envision the potential of a post-racial, national future through the image of the mixed-race child. In *Quiet Violence*, Duiker engages with this familiar trope in order to reject it. Instead of with Mmbatho and her mixed-race child, the very image of reproductive futurism, Tshepo's future lies with the decolonial brotherhood. The formation of the brotherhood facilitates a reformulation of kinship that is not bound by heteronormativity, monogamy or expectations of reproductivity. This is specifically radical because, as discussed earlier, queerness is typically seen as un-African. We can consider this move in the context of Van der Vlies's observation that, "[g]ay men, lesbians and bisexuals serve frequently in postapartheid writing as markers of the new social possibilities of freedom, but often also trouble narratives of the new national family's futurity" (11). This 'troubling' exists in *Quiet Violence*, but Duiker uses the trope of the queer figure as a way to specifically critique a nationalist agenda, by moving away from a nationalist mode of futurity.

As scholars such as Frenkel and Carolin have observed, *Quiet Violence* marks an important intervention, particularly for its centring of queer experiences in South Africa – and its placing them within a decolonial African context. However, in the process of creating a vision of masculine queer futurity, the novel risks reinscribing a familiar narrative of

gendered and racialised exclusion, whereby women are commonly marginalised within nationalist, anti-colonial movements. Mmbatho's disavowal can be read in the broader context of the suppression of South African women's voices' that has historically occurred, as discussed in the context of *David's Story*. This gendered exclusion is surprising, in part because Tshepo expresses concern for what he perceives as the misogyny within gay culture. When Sebastian argues that "gay men are going to play a more prominent role in the future", Tshepo responds: "Gay men, gay men. You've said nothing about gay women. In fact any woman listening to you would think you're a misogynist, all this pro-male rhetoric" (254). Tshepo is, then, alert to the links between patriarchal oppression and social justice movement, yet fails to surpass them in his search for a queer mode of futurity. As the only female narrator, Mmbatho's perspective provides an account of black women's experiences in South Africa. However, Stobie has criticised Mmbatho's characterization, due to the way that her

> entire identity […] becomes tied to the hybrid baby that she is expecting. Her role becomes solely that of mother of a future saviour-figure, who is outside the frame of the text. This is a much critiqued stereotype, which frequently occurs in works by male African authors – that of Mama Afrika (83).

The story arc of Mmbatho, whose very name is Setswana for 'Mother of the People', corresponds to a wider tradition in South African literature, which inscribes women as Mother and Home-maker. Samuelson identifies this particularly in literary works from the transition, arguing that this inscription occurs through textual and discursive strategies of domestication (*Remembering the Nation,* 5). Mmbatho, I suggest, is doubly cast out by Tshepo: for her femininity, but also for her pregnancy, which becomes a symbol of her heteronormativity.

Yet, in a departure from Stobie's reading, I argue that by the end of the novel Mmbatho is not entirely reduced to the physical burden of her use-value production or, in other words, her reproductivity. While Mmbatho's characterization relies on familiar tropes that position female characters as mothers and bearers of culture, to solely focus on these elements of her narrative undermines the significance of Mmbatho's own decolonial journey. Instead, Mmbatho and Tshepo's diverging character arcs suggest that decolonization can be approached in different ways. Mmbatho undertakes her own, parallel decolonial journey by reconnecting to her African heritage, coming to understand her pregnancy in decolonial terms. Her pregnancy is depicted as a productive catalyst that awakens her from "slumber", "kicking" her and forcing her "to open [her] eyes and see things for what they are" (422).

From reading books, she teaches herself African cultural traditions and begins to braid her hair in the style that "women in the Gambia wear" when pregnant (450). "The eight splits in the crown of my head are supposed to symbolise the eight ancestors of health and prosperity", she tells Tshepo (450). Rather than merely aesthetic traditions, following Emma Dabiri, hairstyles formed "an integral part of ritual, constituting a visual form of language" in pre-colonial, African oral societies (Dabiri, 32). However, such practices were devalued as part of the stigmatization of African cultural practices and customs that occurred through European dominion. As the socio-political functions of hairstyling were denied through colonialism, Mmbatho's work to relearn and embody these alternative forms of communication exemplifies epistemic decolonization. By recovering these ancient cultural practices, Mmbatho positions herself within a matriarchal chain that is comparable to Lecha and Zeta's transgenerational, archival work in *Almanac*. While Mmbatho's journey to decolonization is more insular than Tshepo's, as her focus remains on herself and her child, the novel implies that there need to be multiple, parallel moves to achieve decolonial futurity. In this way, *Quiet Violence* corresponds with *Almanac*, which does not present a singular vision of decolonization. Rather, the various groups involved in the revolutionary movement have different, and even conflicting, aims that diverge but that do not preclude solidarity.

Almanac's treatment of women nevertheless diverges from *Quiet Violence*, for it explicitly rejects dominant gendered tropes that Duiker employs, including that of the maternal female figure. As Huhndorf observes:

> *Almanac* […] refutes two gendered representational traditions: one associated with nationalism (including indigenous nationalism) which assigns women the tasks of cultural and biological reproduction […] and colonial conventions […] that position indigenous women as collaborators with European colonizers and traitors to tribal communities, often through their sexuality (158).

Huhndorf identifies Zeta and Lecha as "among the female characters who challenge the centrality and conventional meanings of indigenous women's reproduction, in both the cultural and biological senses" (158). She points to their kitchen as a site that, filled with weaponry and drug paraphernalia, overturns conventional domestic associations. She goes on to note that, instead, "freed from the function of representing cultural traditions, [women] serve […] as the most militant revolutionary leaders". Many of the primary characters driving the narrative and the revolutionary movements within it are women. From Lecha and Zeta, the twins responsible for translating the ancient almanac, to Angelita La Escapia, the Mayan leader of a leftist rebel cell in Mexico, Silko places women at the forefront of Indigenous

resistance. Even the smaller moments of disruption in the novel are frequently performed by women, such as the old Yupik woman who brings down U.S. surveillance aircraft by summoning the anger of the ancestors, or Zeta's illegal smuggling operation that undermines the sovereignty of the national border.

Almanac's positioning of women as powerful figures in the movement for decolonization is a recovery of the matrilineal traditions that characterise many Indigenous cultures, including the Pueblos. The enduring nature of these socio-political structures is reflected in the leadership positions that women have historically held, and continue to hold, in Indigenous resistance movements: from Idle No More, a transnational movement started in 2012 by four women in Saskatchewan, to the numerous anti-extractive protests that are currently taking place across Latin America.[106] The motto of Women of All Red Nations (WARN) sums up this tradition, stating: "Indian women have always been in the front lines in the defense of our nations" (Estes, 181).[107] Through colonialism, however, Indigenous women were removed from positions of power, as traditionally matriarchal societies were restructured. As Huhndorf and Cheryl Suzack highlight, the consequences of colonialism are always shaped by gender and the historic imposition of Western values and practices continues to structure conditions of inequality in distinctly gendered ways:

> For Indigenous women, colonization has involved their removal from positions of power, the replacement of traditional gender roles with Western patriarchal practices, the exertion of colonial control over Indigenous communities through the management of women's bodies, and sexual violence" (Suzack et al., 1).

The undoing of gendered oppression, which is intrinsically a part of the capitalist system, is necessary to the dismantling of the structures of modernity/coloniality. Silko's repositioning of women at the centre of political processes is explicitly decolonial, then, as it rejects colonially-enforced, patriarchal social norms. The matrilineal tradition of the Pueblos and other Indigenous cultures, in which power is inherited through female lines, is mirrored in the narrative of *Almanac*. This takes literal form through the physical passing down of the ancient notebooks across generations, as Yoeme entrusts the pages to her granddaughters.

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[106] For detailed discussion of the role played by women in Latin American Indigenous movements, see *Indigenous Women's Movements in Latin America* by Stéphanie Rousseau and Anahi Morales Hudon.
[107] Women of All Red Nations (WARN) was formed in the 1970s by activists of the American Indian Movement (AIM) as a distinct group, after female members attended an international conference organised by the Geneva NGO Sub-Committee on Racism, Racial Discrimination, Apartheid and Decolonization, where they encountered other revolutionary women's groups. They sought to highlight the differential effects experienced by women under colonialism, with an emphasis on health concerns. See Nick Estes's *Our History is the Future* p. 181 for further discussion.

The stories they contain symbolise and manifest power as, throughout the novel, we are reminded of the power that narratives hold. Therefore, while I agree with Huhndorf's assertion that "the women in various ways refuse motherhood and use their sexuality in the service of revolution", I depart from her analysis which understands *Almanac's* "male characters […] as the bearers of culture" (158). While they reject the conventional roles of mother and sexual object, this does not prevent the women of *Almanac* from being "bearers of culture". This is a role that carries with it significant power and which Lecha, Zeta and Yoeme occupy as the literal bearers of cultural memory.

Planetary Decolonization Beyond Species

Having focused my analysis thus far on the ways that Silko and Duiker engage with the intersectionality of *human* struggles, I shall now turn to the critical function of the *non-human.* This is entangled with the discussions in the previous section for, as Nixon observes, "the segregations of humans from nonhumans have long been implicated in the violent segregations of humans from humans" (175). By the non-human, I refer to the other forms of life on the planet, including animals, plants, and trees, as well as the "abiotic components of the ecosystem", such as water, minerals and soil (Iheka, 2). While it is not possible here to undertake a detailed analysis of Duiker and Silko's various engagements with the non-human, in the remainder of this chapter I foreground its significance in order to demonstrate how the relational ethic that animates both novels transcends species. In dialogue with theoretical paradigms from Indigenous studies, African studies and postcolonial studies, I argue that Silko and Duiker's engagement with the non-human is crucial to their decolonial projects, which can be read in the context of their broader recovery of non-Western worldviews. Both novels position the human and non-human to be entwined within a dynamic web of relationality. This is anti-hierarchical, as none is superior or, crucially, more or less animate; and dynamic, as it is fluid, changing based on shifting needs and responsibilities. Crucial to this is the way that the non-human is imbued with animacy: a quality of "agency, awareness, mobility and liveness" that is less commonly ascribed to the non-human in Western systems of thought (Chen, 2). Refusing the animacy of the non-human (and, of course, of some humans) is foundational to coloniality/modernity, as it enables selected bodies and forms to be reduced to a "resource to be utilized in whatever way [is] necessary for profit and 'progress'" (Adamson, 144).[108] This logic counters many African and Native American worldviews, which share the belief that the non-human is imbued with life and spirit. In both *Almanac* and *Quiet Violence*, the non-human is registered

[108] Chen's work observes how certain bodies have been "de-animated" in Western discourse, paying particular attention to how race and sexuality inform this process.

a site of disruption that facilitates the interruption of capitalist modernity/coloniality. Accordingly, I argue that Silko and Duiker's recognition of non-human animacy is crucial to their capacity as unsettling, decolonial works.

The term slow violence has been employed by Nixon to name "a violence that occurs gradually and out of sight, a violence of delayed destruction that is dispersed across time and space, an attritional violence that is typically not viewed as violence at all" (2). This concept usefully frames various types of environmental damage and their corresponding effects on human and non-human life as forms of violence. He argues that they pose a "representational challenge" in today's world of "spectacle-driven corporate media", as they frequently occur over long temporal scales (6). Literature, Nixon argues, creates a space for slow violence to be rendered visible, which frequently occurs through the representation of environmental destruction that is normally obscured from public view. Silko shines a light, for example, on the way that Native American reservations were rendered wastelands through the impact of the uranium mining industry in the mid twentieth century and details the consequences of the failure to clean up the contaminated environment. But Nixon is also concerned with literature's imaginative capacity: its ability to "apprehend threats imaginatively that remain imperceptible to the senses" (15). Several of the novels that I have discussed so far have evoked the threat of slow violence and realities of environmental racism. Silko and Duiker's texts expand on this through their explicit attempts to imagine slow violence by making environmental degradation visible. Yet of equal, if not more, concern here is how the imaginative capacity of literature renders visible the *animacy* of the non-human. As I argue, both Silko and Duiker register the non-human as animate by relocating it within active systems of kinship.

Many African and Indigenous worldviews, which have necessarily developed in relation to specific places and ecosystems, share a fundamental understanding that non-human beings, creatures and forms are imbued with animacy. Through their depictions of non-human animacy, both Silko and Duiker's novels evoke an understanding of "distributed agency", as defined by Iheka. Iheka's term places African epistemologies into dialogue with materialist-oriented scholarship, to consider "the idea that humans possess and share agency with the landscape and animals, among others" (4). Iheka suggests that this analysis, which reflects the animist traditions of many African cultures, is essential for understanding "human proximity to nonhumans and the need to rethink how we relate to these other beings" (60). Iheka's approach engages with parallel conversations in Indigenous studies around the urgent need to consider "the possibility that agency (in this case, political agency) is not limited to the human species" (Hudson, 3). Such discourse must be understood within the context of Native American epistemologies, which "accord greater animacy to

nonhumans" including "nonorganisms, such as stones and places"; those typically "not understood in Western frameworks as living" (TallBear, 'Beyond the Life/Not-Life Binary', 187-8).[109] The refusal of non-human animacy is foundational to coloniality and capitalism, which "denies nature's agency, conceiving of nature as a passive, static input, even as it simultaneously appropriates nature's energy and activity" (Deckard, 169). *Almanac* and *Quiet Violence* witness the animacy of the non-human through visions of distributed agency that imagine decolonial and environmental justice movements in which humans play only a small part. However, unlike Iheka, Duiker and Silko's texts suggest an agency that is explicitly intentional by framing the non-human as sentient. Registering the non-human as agentic, they directly disrupt the ideological hierarchies that capitalist modernity and coloniality depend upon.

Quiet Violence and the Planetary

The threat of climate change is not explicitly named in Duiker's novel. It is perhaps for this reason that critics of the novel have not analysed it through an eco-critical lens, with the majority of scholarship on the text focusing on its engagements with race and sexuality. Yet, I suggest that we can understand the looming destruction that haunts Tshepo through the context of anthropogenic climate change. The threat of environmental catastrophe is made legible through the novel's engagement with temporality. Crucially, this involves Tshepo becoming attuned to the 'quiet violence' of environmental degradation and, with it, the animacy of the non-human. The titular notion of quiet violence can be employed to name the seeping, insipid damage wrought by coloniality. Like the concept of slow violence developed by Nixon a decade later, Duiker's quiet violence demands a reconsideration of temporal scales. It places a focus on the longer frame of planetary time, as well as that of structural, rather than spectacular, violence. Like Nixon, Duiker's emphasis on the various sub-sonic forms of violence associated with fast capitalism challenges a societal bias for spectacular, event-based trauma. However, Duiker's writing insists on the inseparability of environmental degradation from ongoing structures of coloniality. Accordingly, *Quiet Violence* asserts that a reconceptualization of onto-epistemologies is necessary in order for the planet as a whole to escape these systems of violence. While Nixon's emphasis is on how literature can render such forms of *violence* visible, Duiker's novel suggests that a reoriented perception of temporal scales is essential to recognising the *animacy* of the non-human. Through a reframing of temporality, *Quiet Violence* reveals non-human animacy. This coheres with Caroline Rooney's observation that, "[a]nimism is not without a thinking of time; it

[109] TallBear's use of the term "animacy" is informed by Chen, who understands it to be "much more than the state of being animate" (Chen, 4).

perhaps rather concerns a different thinking of being in relation to time" (8). By becoming attuned to a planetary sense of time, Tshepo eventually is able to "hear the quiet work of trees growing" and understand the fundamental relationality of human and nonhuman environments (59). In my analysis, I argue that the novel can be understood as a planetary Bildungsroman. This follows the protagonist's efforts to locate himself within a *planetary* (rather than national) society, foregrounding the need for kinship relations with human and non-human others.

Quiet Violence is an urban novel, concerned with the multicultural cityscapes and ghettos of Cape Town and Johannesburg. This setting allows Duiker to recover the animacy of the non-human in the place where, perhaps, it is least expected. This is particularly the case with Nyanga township, the site where Tshepo awakens to new ways of being. One of the oldest townships in Cape Town, Nyanga was established in 1948 as a result of the migrant labour system. Post-apartheid, the area is known for extreme unemployment and high levels of HIV/AIDs. It is in these overwhelmingly urban postcolonial spaces, cities and townships that are still shaped by histories of extractivism and racialised segregation, that the idea of human and non-human relationality is frequently obscured. Compare *Quiet Violence,* for example, to Mda's *The Heart of Redness,* in which the community of Qolorha continues to live in an ongoing (if disrupted) relationality to the animals, plants and waters that surround them. By contrast, Duiker's depiction of Cape Town is notable for the way that characters live at a distinct remove from 'nature'. Their lives are dominated by a fast capitalist consumer culture and desire for the latest music and fashion – cravings that are largely dictated by the all-too-present advertising industry, even for the poorest members of society. When in Nyanga, surrounded by pollution and poverty, Tshepo observes that a "Coca-Cola sign towers above on a billboard. What does it mean to us, what does it mean to them who have nothing? Buy more even when you have nothing?" (430). The extreme inequality in Cape Town is rendered through the lavish hotels of Tshepo's wealthy patrons, to the absolute poverty and pollution faced by communities in the Cape Flats and Gugulethu. The geopolitical space of post-apartheid Cape Town is separated through the socio-economic divide between rich and poor, which is of course racialised.

The paradigmatic example of this occurs when Tshepo walks around Nyanga township near the end of the novel, appalled at the conditions that fellow Africans are living in. Their poverty is inherently connected to environmental degradation, a burden that disproportionately affects the poor black population**.** In the township, Tshepo observes: "the filth is inescapable. Every wire mesh fence I see is plastered with plastic bags. Buy and dump, that is the message. After a while the pollution becomes a language […] that spreads across the township" (433-4). The pollution that threatens both human and non-human

beings, takes the form of an animate decay spreading across the landscape. Duiker employs a poetic linguistic style that formally evokes the animate threat of the non-human; using a linguistic metaphor, the message of capitalism becomes a verbal form of decay. Duiker's choice of imagery is not coincidental: language is fundamentally associated with humans and it is humans that are to blame. In a jarring passage, Tshepo ruminates on the violence that humans have wrought onto the earth:

> We have done so little with so much. Terrible things wait for us when we sleep. The night is eating us out of futures we believe we deserve. The air is poisoning us with anger […] we have become vermin, pests, jeopardising everything that lives […] the decay is pervasive. The core is corrupted. The roots have been lost (436).

Duiker's use of language here blurs the boundaries between human and non-human. Humanity is characterised as vermin, a pest on the planet. As an organic growth, humanity's roots have disappeared, its time is surely limited. As the human race is dying the non-human is, by contrast, imbued with vitality and agency that is registered in the language and imagery that Duiker employs. The air is anthropomorphised with "anger", portrayed to be actively poisoning humanity in an attempt to eradicate the species from the earth. As with *Almanac,* non-human beings and forms are here depicted as planetary agents, cognizant of the violence they have suffered and embarking on actions to mediate future destruction: "Whales and other wise creatures of the sea", Tshepo narrates, "are changing migration patterns, settling in different places and warning other creatures" (436). However, unlike in Silko's vision of multispecies alliances where the non-human is working alongside the revolution, Tshepo envisages the non-human as explicitly attacking humanity to destroy the species responsible for environmental catastrophe. Imbued with vitality, Tshepo fears that the planet is working against humanity from microbial to planetary scales: "[d]iseases far deadlier than Aids, more insidious, are germinating, waiting for ideal conditions to wreak havoc and death. The ocean and the sky are plotting against us" (436). Duiker's depiction of non-human animacy can be illuminated through an engagement with African animist traditions: social/spiritual worldviews which hold the belief that "inanimate objects and things act, that they have designs on us, and that we are interpellated by them" (Anselm Franke, cited in Iheka, 60). Through registering non-human animacy, and through an explicit engagement with alternative belief systems, *Quiet Violence* employs animist worldviews to reconceptualise the threat of climate change. This crucially allows Tshepo to begin to understand new ways of being in the world that are rooted in reciprocity, with human and non-human others.

This moment in *Quiet Violence* marks a rupture at the height of the novel's climax, as Tshepo wanders through Nyanga. The narrative is physically disrupted, as he is ostensibly experiencing a psychotic breakdown rendered through a manic first-person narrative, characterised by short, frenzied sentences. This section comprises a frantic, unsettling narrative, notable for its dreamlike style that contrasts with the realism that characterises the majority of the novel. It is only in this state that Tshepo is able to bear witness to the full extent of violence surrounding him: literally, "[m]ore and more people become visible," in the "maze of streets and shacks" (428). When his sense of self is at its most fragmented, Tshepo is more attuned to the consciousness of all that is around him. In turn, this allows him a better understanding of the planet and non-human beings. He is able to reconceptualise, not only his place in the world, but other ways of *being* in the world. This ontological shift, brought about through an affective mode of learning, is vital to his decolonial awakening and eventual recovery. In the final pages of the novel, Tshepo has recovered from his psychosis and his narrative is calmer; no longer marked by frantic, chaotic sentences and paranoid speculation. However, he remains cognizant of the animacy of the non-human and is able to listen: "I went on a journey and found that trees had more stories to tell than animals, that they remembered more. And their pain is deeper, quieter" (457). Here, *Quiet Violence* evokes the power of storytelling that runs through the novel, but gestures towards the possibility of storytelling beyond anthropocentrism. As an interlocutor, mediating between the earth and the reader, Tshepo renders violence against the non-human speakable. Not as separate to, or in competition with, the material oppression of dispossessed peoples, but as intrinsically connected. He evokes a responsibility to listen to, to protect, the earth that has been forgotten: "[t]he air remembers too much. It longs for someone to listen" (435).

As Duiker's understanding of gendered and sexual fluidity is articulated in relation to pre-colonial African traditions, the reformulation of the place of the non-human is also registered in terms of a resurgence. Earlier in the novel, Tshepo encounters Benjamin – a Rastafarian who passes epistemological knowledge on to him, recalling African understandings of natural law. He evokes a responsibility that humans have to other living beings, upon which Tshepo, by the end of the novel, learns to act. Refuting the idea that conservation efforts are a Western invention, he says: "de black mens knew about nature protection long before de white mens come. In dem old times dere was more laws for dem protection of nature dan dem protection of de peoples" (187).[110] Particularly important is

[110] The ANC highlighted this concept of shared responsibility in their 1993 Bill of Rights for a New South Africa, stating: "The land, the waters and the sky and all the natural assets which they contain, are the common heritage of the people of South Africa who are equally entitled to their enjoyment and responsible

the disruption of the binary between human and non-human. Benjamin, whose oral narrative is rendered in vernacular language, tells Tshepo that before "de white mens", "the African" did not think of "de hills, de waters and de creatures of Jehovia as wilderness": "because he be close to dem, he did not see himself as different from dem" (187). The logic of coloniality that defines and separates the human/non-human into hierarchies is an example of what Warrior understands to be "one of the most effective strategies of colonization" ('Indigenous Collectives', 386). Warrior argues that the act of definition by the coloniser, "fixes the object of definition and renders it […] controllable, domitable, and, ultimately, consumable" (386). This strategy, which imposes strict boundaries around forms, bodies, and beings, forcing them into hierarchies, was essential to colonialism in South Africa, which depended on the consumption of African bodies through the exploitation of labour, and of the non-human (from lands and minerals to non-human animals). If, then, we understand the strategy of defining to be an integral aspect of coloniality, we can contemplate the decolonial potential of resisting or subverting processes of definition and categorization. This is the root of Duiker's decolonial aesthetics. A forced binary between Humanity and Nature fundamentally poses a conflict with the worldviews identified by the Rastafarian that Tshepo meets. Through evoking an understanding of distributed agency that is not exclusive to human agency – as well as an affective connectedness between different human and non-human life forms – Duiker resists any easy processes of definition. This work, in its disruption of the logic of coloniality, must be understood as explicitly decolonial.

It is important to note that Tshepo does not idealise the Rastafarian culture he encounters. Indeed, he critiques what he perceives as their "appalling" treatment of women and children, arguing that "[i]t is always about the men, the lion, the rasta, nothing about the woman and child" (167). He identifies further hypocrisies within their worldview, critiquing the way the Rastafarian community treats its surroundings "like a rubbish dump", despite advancing a belief system grounded in "living in harmony" with nature (162-3). However, this critical engagement with Rastafarian culture and their recovery of African traditions allows Tshepo to develop his own understanding of human and non-human relationality. The novel doesn't distinguish between African epistemological traditions here and, while this flattening of cultural differences is potentially problematic, I read this as stemming from Duiker's broader desire to move beyond differences, towards a pan-African mode of relationality. This move can be situated in the context of a broader cultural effort to 're-Africanize' South Africa during the anti-apartheid struggle and in the period immediately

for their conservation" (cited in Christiansen, 230). However, it has not practically been incorporated into the ANC's agenda, which has done little to alter the country's reliance on the extractive industries, for example, or to promote material equality in terms of access to natural resources.

following liberation.[111] Such a move departs from South Africa's historical attempts to position itself in terms of its exceptionality. For many centuries, Mbembe writes, South Africa "has defined itself as not of Africa, but as an outpost of European imperialism in the Dark Continent" (Mbembe, 'Decolonizing Knowledge'). Post-apartheid, an exceptionalist narrative of South Africa's uniqueness continues to be perpetuated, inseparable from the rise of xenophobia that targets Africans from elsewhere on the continent. In *Quiet Violence,* then, Duiker re-orients South Africa through a recovery of African cultural traditions, mythologies and worldviews.

This move occurs, quite literally, in Tshepo's decision to leave the 'cosmopolitan' Cape Town at the end of the novel, choosing to relocate to Johannesburg, which becomes the space in which the decolonial revolution takes root. Considering the spaces of the two cities, Tshepo muses, that in Cape Town "there are more white people with money. They can afford to get private security and fortress themselves" (448). By contrast, Johannesburg is a melting pot of vibrant African cultures. Living in Hillbrow, Tshepo observes, "I feel like I live in Africa when I walk out in the street and hear dark-skinned beauties rapping in Lingala or Congo or a French patois that I don't understand" (454). Duiker doesn't romanticise this environment, acknowledging the conflict that can result from migration and the subsequent mixing of cultures, but it is notable that he situates South African futurity in the context of the *continent*, as opposed to the nation. Further, the novel's position cannot be neatly summarised by what has been dismissively referred to as the 're-traditionalization' of Africa. Patrick Chabal uses this phrase to refer to "the ways in which Africans appear to outside observers to have 'gone back' to some of their 'age-old traditions' and the consequences of such 'regression' for African politics" (cited in Garuba, 'Explorations in Animist Materialism', 265). Far from being 'regressive', as they are characterised in Western discourse, the African worldviews that are embraced in this novel are markedly future-oriented. By adopting them, it becomes possible for Tshepo to imagine new futures. This temporal framing is further created through Duiker's use of the present tense throughout the novel. The present tense conveys the immediacy of the narrative and tells us, the reader, that nothing is foreclosed; the future, as imagined by Tshepo, remains open and entirely possible.

Rather than merely a thematic engagement, the novel's interest in African worldviews manifests at the level of genre. As Lucy Valerie Graham argues, *Quiet Violence* "can be read as a reworking and corruption" of the Bildungsroman (168). While the novel manifests the conventional "coming-of-age process" that is realised through the

[111] Examples of this approach appear in literature written during the anti-apartheid struggle. Simon Lewis argues that much poetry of the 1990s was "marked by a desire to relocate the human presence in South Africa in terms of geological time and continental space" (Lewis, 2095).

protagonist's "harmonization with society", Graham emphasises the way that the novel departs from the idealist Bildungsroman narrative by "foreground[ing] sexual abuses as formative events in the [life] of the [protagonist]" (168). I suggest that Duiker's writing further disrupts the genre through establishing a planetary understanding of society, making it an example of what I refer to as a planetary Bildungsroman. By foregrounding animist worldviews and the animacy of the non-human, *Quiet Violence* disavows the humanist tradition within which this genre is historically located. As a form, Jameson understands the Bildungsroman as a "national allegory": an interpretation that has been influential within scholarship on the postcolonial Bildungsroman (cited in Boes, 20). José Santiago Fernández Vázquez writes that national allegory is common in postcolonial adoptions of the genre, particularly for authors writing in the first years since independence, where they "draw parallels between the experience of the new nations and their young characters" (86). Accordingly, Tshepo's development and maturation in the novel, centred on his efforts to recover from a traumatic past, can be understood in terms of national allegory. What is interesting about this use of a familiar trope is that in this instance it is employed to reject a nationalist politics in favour of a *planetary* vision of futurity. In a pivotal, post-transition moment when many are wondering what South Africa's future will look like, *Quiet Violence* disavows nation in favour of a decolonial, collective future. Tshepo's development and maturation occurs, in part, through a relation to the planet and the non-human environment with which he is surrounded. Consequently, Tshepo rejects the humanist claim of exceptionality, instead situating himself in relation to a dynamic, living relationality with other human and non-human forms. This should be understood as a further adaption of the Bildungsroman genre, which Moretti argues works to create the modern sense of "everyday life" as an "anthropocentric space" (cited in Feder, 21). Instead, Duiker's adaptation of the Bildungsroman deprivileges the human, emphasising the place of the non-human within planetary spaces, including the urban cityscapes in which the novel is set. Human and non-human relations are always entangled, especially in those sites of capitalist development that epitomise Man's attempts to assert authority over Nature. In this reading, I emphasise a rooted understanding of planetarity, which incorporates not only the wide scope of the global but also an attention to specific material relations between human and non-human forms. While Duiker situates Tshepo in relation to Africa and the larger planetary environment, the specificities of the local are still emphasised. Tshepo remains fixed in Johannesburg and in dialogue with its surrounding landscapes and communities. This disrupts a clear binary between the local and planetary, instead emphasising their dynamic interconnectedness.

As a further disruption of the humanistic tradition, within which the Bildungsroman is located, Tshepo fundamentally questions and transcends the normative category of the human. At the end of the novel, he muses:

> Perhaps I'm not really human. Perhaps I am part light, part darkness and part human. I cannot feel that little part aching to be free, screaming for attention. My humanity has been suffocated all my life, it says. I have had to struggle for it, to show people that I am a person. Isn't that madness? (434)

Implicit within Tshepo's ambivalence towards the concept of the human are histories that have seen the exclusion of selected groups from this category. His need to "show people that I am a person" recalls the systemic dehumanization of black bodies under apartheid, which rendered the majority of the South African population to be less-than-human, as well as the legacies of this violent narrative. But it also evokes the idea that he is, somehow, *more* than human: that the sum of his being cannot be contained by this insufficient mode of categorization. It is, I argue, a rejection of processes of categorization that are foundational to the logic of coloniality. This includes the divide between human and non-human, but also informs the categories that serve to forcibly create divisions between people of different races, nations, genders and sexualities. In *Quiet Violence,* Tshepo's acceptance of himself as "not really human", as somehow exceeding humanity, is just one example of Duiker's broader rejection of this violent logic.

The Kinship of Stones

The narrative of *Almanac* depicts an apocalyptic world in which the non-human is registered as both animated and agentic. This is not rendered in magical realist terms or, like it is introduced in *Quiet Violence*, as discernible only in specific mental states. Though the novel mobilises some of the dominant characteristics of magical realism, its rejection of the positivist reading of these tropes makes it difficult to read it through this generic lens. Instead, the representation of agentic "animal, plant and rock spirit-beings" in the novel points to a fundamental conflict between Indigenous and Euroamerican worldviews (Silko, 156). Indigenous knowledge systems are inherently material, as they develop in relation to the specific landscapes in which they reside. As land-based nations, the histories, cultural and spiritual practices, languages and identities of the Pueblos emerge from relations with their environment that is both ancient and ever-changing. In the novel, such worldviews are depicted in opposition to Euroamerican belief systems. According to the Apache elders in *Almanac*, Europeans suffer "a sort of blindness to the world. To them, a 'rock' was just a

'rock' wherever they found it, despite obvious differences in shape, density, color, or the position of the rock relative to all things surrounding it" (224). The Western logic that disavows kinship relations with the non-human is suggested to be the root cause of the crisis that is facing the planet, as Euroamericans "failed to recognize the earth was their mother" (258). And yet, due to the colonial imposition of European worldviews, many Indigenous peoples have also become lost to these ways of thinking. Catholicism played a significant role in the suppression of Indigenous knowledge systems; as Lecha observes, religious indoctrination did "a good job of slandering the old beliefs" (156). Scholars including Warrior and TallBear highlight the implications of such processes of knowledge disruption, recognising the work of rebuilding relations – with human *and* non-human kin – that must be carried out as part of the decolonial process. While the primary characters of *Almanac* are all human, the non-human occupies a central position in driving the narrative via the revolution. The twin brothers leading the march from the South are guided by two blue macaws possessed by spirits that "had come with a message for humans" (476). Not confined to non-human animals, parallel disruptive acts are prophesised to be enacted by the planet itself in direct response to centuries of extraction, as "oceans and mountains" reclaim "the riches ripped from the heart of the earth" (734). As with *Quiet Violence, Almanac* does not adhere to a romanticised rendering of non-human animacy that is commonly found in magical realist works; rather, the non-human is often characterised here as a monstrous force. The emergence of the giant stone snake on the Laguna reservation is a literal act of disruption that is the catalyst for the entire revolution. Prophesised to herald the end of the colonial "epoch of the Death-Eye Dog", the snake manifests in a heavily symbolic space: the uranium mine close to the Laguna site of emergence (251).[112]

Stone holds a particular place in the novel for conveying the importance of kinship relations with the non-human. The importance of stone is emphasised throughout the narratives that focus on the Laguna Pueblo: in the character Sterling's affinity with, and care for, stone in his work as a gardener; the significance placed upon the appearance of the stone snake; and through the narrative of the lost stone idols which are mourned by the Laguna. Through these narratives, Silko emphasises the different ways in which stone is kin to the Laguna and the fatal, far-reaching consequences of a Western conception of stone as inanimate, extractable resource. In her writing on pipestone, a material found in Minnesota that is sacred for the Dakota, TallBear writes of the lifeforce of this particular stone, which she understands in the context of "the social relations that proliferate as that stone emerges

[112] The epoch of the Death-Eye Dog refers to the time of colonialism, during which "human beings, especially the alien invaders, would become obsessed with hungers and impulses commonly seen in wild dogs" (Silko, 251).

from the earth, is carved into pipe, and is passed from hand to hand" (Beyond the Life/Not-Life Binary, 195). Accordingly, TallBear registers this stone as "a vibrant material", but not in terms of "cellular vibrancy". Rather, she asserts:

> We can describe pipestone as vibrant because without it prayers would be grounded, human social relations impaired, and everyday lives of quarriers and carvers depleted of the meaning they derive from working with stone […] And so this place is taken by many to be sacred […] The stone there is sometimes spoken of as a relative, harkening in part back to that creation narrative (195).

While TallBear is writing of the Dakota's specific relationality to pipestone, her comments are illuminating in the context of *Almanac,* particularly in relation to the Laguna Pueblo and the land on which they traditionally reside. Sterling's account of the stolen idols emphasises the violent rupture caused by the colonial imposition of a Western belief system on the Laguna Pueblo. Though made of stone, the figures taken from the tribe are not "lithic" objects as described by the museum curator in Santa Fe (35). Instead, they are relatives to the Laguna people: "not merely carved stones, these were beings formed by the hands of the kachina spirits":

> The theft of the stone figures years ago had caused great anguish. Dark gray basalt the size and shape of an ear of corn, the stone figures had been given to the people by the kachina spirits at the beginning of the Fifth World, present time. 'Little Grandmother' and 'Little Grandfather' lived in buckskin bundles gray and brittle with age. Although faceless and without limbs, the 'little grandparents' had each worn a necklace of tiny white shell and turquoise beads. Old as the earth herself, the small stone figures had accompanied the people on their vast journey from the North (31).

The ancient figures provide a material mnemonic connection for the Laguna to their creation narrative, "given to the people by the kachina spirits at the beginning of the Fifth World" (31). Until they were stolen, the protection of the "esteemed and beloved ancestors" had been taken on by "[g]eneration after generation". The Laguna's active kinship relation with stone is exemplified through these processes of care. The rupture of this relationship, through the theft of the figures and their display in a museum, represents the many kinship relations that were irrevocably disrupted through the imposition of coloniality/modernity on Indigenous peoples and lands. As such, the original theft – and the refusal of the curator to

return the figures centuries later – becomes an act of epistemic and ontological violence, as it disavows Laguna kinship relations. The consequences of this wider violation are signified by the eventual extraction of uranium from the sacred site on the reservation and the slow violence caused by the uranium tailings decades after the mine's closure.[113] Sterling's return to the uranium mine and to the stone snake at the end of the novel marks a recovery of this worldview. Present in the ancient notebooks and prophesised to return, the stone snake that erupts from the site of Laguna emergence holds specific cultural significance. Yet, it also enables connectivity across cultures. Sterling's encounter with the snake is framed in relation to parallel encounters in Africa: in the same way that the "giant snakes" in Africa "talked to the people again, Sterling is eventually able to understand the snake's purpose" (762). This mode of communication, in both contexts, is suggested to only be possible following ontological and epistemic decolonization. The non-human within *Almanac*, then, becomes a conduit for relationality – not only between human and non-human worlds, but also between different cultures, as it elucidates points of connection between African and Indigenous worldviews.

The environment from which the snake emerges is rendered in apocalyptic terms: "Ahead all [Sterling] could see were mounds of tailings thirty feet high, uranium waste blowing in the breeze, carried by the rain to springs and rivers. Here was the new work of the Destroyers; here was destruction and poison. Here was life ended" (760). As Sterling witnesses the poisonous tailings spreading across the landscape, Silko animates the physical vibrancy of radioactive waste as it makes its way into the water sources shared by humans and animals alike. This wasteland is the site where the stone snake appears – an act of physical disruption that is the catalyst for the entire revolution. As an ancient being, present in the original Mayan notebooks, the snake emphasises the long temporal frame of planetary time and, with it, the enduring resilience of the earth: "The snake didn't care about the uranium tailings; humans had desecrated only themselves with the mine, not the earth" (762). Though the snake is ostensibly inanimate, positioned with its "head raised [..] dramatically" and its "jaws open wide", Silko's language imbues the "spirit being" with vitality (761). This towering figure is evocative of the Angel of History, which Walter Benjamin describes with "eyes […] staring, [and] mouth […] open" with a "pile of debris before him [that] grows skyward" ('On the Concept of History'). The uranium waste surrounding the snake evokes Benjamin's apocalyptic landscape: "The snake was so near the tailings it appeared as if it might be fleeing the mountains of waste" (762). The snake is surrounded by the spiritual, cultural, and environmental destruction that has been carried out in the name of Western

[113] Uranium tailings are a radioactive waste by-product of uranium mining. Voyles writes that these tailings leach "radon gas into the air and water" and scatter "radioactive debris into the ecosystem".

'progress'. And, like Benjamin's Angel, where we "perceive a chain of events", to the snake coloniality/modernity is "one single catastrophe which keeps piling wreckage upon wreckage and hurls it in front of his feet" ('On the Concept of History'). Silko's epic narrative attempts to make sense of these catastrophes on a continuum, to contain its entirety within a single swollen form. Following his return, however, Sterling realises that – unlike Benjamin's Angel – the snake is not looking back at this past of destruction. Rather, it is looking to the future, to the revolution coming from the south: "Sterling knew why the giant snake had returned now; he knew what the snake's message was to the people. The snake was looking south, in the direction from which the twin brothers and the people would come" (762-3). And so, the novel ends with the invocation of decolonial futurity, cautiously optimistic for a better world but fully cognizant of the destruction that will undoubtedly occur. Employing stone to reveal the entangled colonial histories of environmental and cultural expropriation, Silko foregrounds the extractive dynamic that characterises the relationship between settler and Native. Yet, these engagements with stone also enable Silko to posit an alternative mode of relating made possible through the resurgence of Indigenous worldviews. Through imagining processes of physical and onto-epistemological return, *Almanac* foregrounds the importance of being in good relation to human and non-human others as essential to environmental justice, as well as decolonial, agendas.

Conclusion

According to Dillon, biskaaybiiyang "involves discovering how personally one is affected by colonization, discarding the emotional and physical baggage carried from its impact and recovering ancestral traditions in order to adapt in our post-Native Apocalypse world" (10). While biskaaybiiyang is a word rooted in Anishinaabe cultures and spaces, Dillon's emphasis on the work that colonised peoples must carry out to achieve ontological and epistemic decolonization is illuminating with regards to South Africa. In *Quiet Violence,* the characters' journeys to decolonization are more immediately recognisable as personal or spiritual than those in *Almanac,* due in part to its first-person, introspective narrative style. Tshepo and Mmbatho undergo personal journeys of epistemic and ontological decolonization before they are able to work collectively in order to begin to adapt the world around them. The characters in *Almanac*, by contrast, undergo less character development and instead tend to emphasise the need to enact their decolonial vision collectively through material forms of retribution. Nevertheless, *Almanac* foregrounds the significance of Indigenous belief systems and ancestral traditions, such as modes of transgenerational knowledge transfer. This is epitomised by the importance placed on the ancient Mayan almanac, which predicts the form that the coming revolution will take. Furthermore, through the character Sterling, who went

through the Indian Residential School system and has been exiled from his community, the novel provides insight into the personal consequences of colonial policies that individuals must work to overcome. Through his affinity with stones as a gardener and, later, his interactions with the giant stone snake, Sterling recovers a form of kinship relation that was ostensibly lost. Consequently, Sterling occupies a fundamental role in the mediation between human and non-human environments. The concluding chapter locates the resolution of the novel with his re-awakening to such forms of relationality.

By framing the non-human as animate, Duiker and Silko's narratives directly disrupt the ideological hierarchies that capitalist modernity and therefore coloniality depends upon. Through their engagements with the non-human, both texts evoke a radical interrelationality between human and non-human worlds. In both novels, this re-orientation is framed in terms of a temporal shift that emphasises the long timescales of the planetary and the non-human. Through acts of embodied and material rupture, each manifests the violent disruption wrought by the implementation of coloniality. Colonialism, as Indigenous scholars have observed, fundamentally disrupts long-standing kinship relations between human and non-human environments. This manifests at both epistemic and ontological levels through the "symbolic, material, and bodily violence of [the] audacious separation [of] Humanity and Nature" that is foundational to capitalism and thus colonialism (J. Moore, 78). Significantly, these textual disruptions occur at sites of extreme colonial violence and extraction: the uranium mine on the Laguna reservation, and Nyanga, one of the oldest townships in Cape Town, established for the purpose of labour exploitation. However, they are critical moments in which key characters, here Sterling and Tshepo, are re-awakened to the interrelationality of human and non-human worlds. Silko and Duiker thus suggest that such processes of rupture, on different scales, are necessary in order to repair relations, to begin to undo the epistemological disruption of coloniality. As Warrior tells us, an "awareness of interrelationality [can] help us melt the fixing effects of instruments of definition" ('Indigenous Collectives', 369). If we understand the strategy of defining to be an integral aspect of coloniality, we can contemplate the decolonial potential of literature that subverts such processes of categorization, through evoking an understanding of animacy that is not exclusive to humans – as well as an affective connectedness between different human and non-human life forms. This knowledge is evoked through the very structures of these novels, which formalise an ethic of relationality by placing diverse experiences in dialogue with one another.

While the particular local conditions of oppression are always distinct, Silko and Duiker register a shared struggle against a *global* system that is rooted in a logic of coloniality – the survival of which is dependent on the continued exploitation of human and non-human

forms. In distinct ways, *Almanac* and *Quiet Violence* recognise that relational modes of living are necessary for future planetary survival – interventions that are rooted in the recovery of non-Western epistemologies. In the imagined communities that texts evoke, we can locate a shared desire to disrupt colonial logics that categorise and de-animate certain bodies and forms. Integral to this is the way that bodies and objects (both human and non-human) commonly rendered inanimate, or less animate, in Western terms are *re*-animated through the writing process, through being positioned in active networks of relationality. Decolonization, of course, is always irreducibly specific and will not – indeed, cannot – mean the same thing in different geographical or cultural spaces. As scholars such as Byrd (2011), and Tuck and Yang (2012) have observed, solidarities are frequently complicated by local experiences of coloniality and conceptualizations of decolonization that can have conflicting aims. Yet, while any such differences must be taken into account, they should not preclude an awareness of the relationality of struggles. Reading these novels together offers the potential to create spaces of co-resistance, while foregrounding the specificity of each context. Through their attempts to reveal and disrupt the logic of coloniality, Silko and Duiker ask us to look beyond narrow categorizations and processes of exclusion; to instead look for relationality. They each emphasise that the hope for decolonial futurity lies in moving beyond such borders, through forming unexpected collaborations, through remaking kin.

Conclusion

The Novel as Relational Object

Yoeme had believed power resides within certain stories; this power ensures the story to be retold, and with each retelling a slight but permanent shift took place.

\- Leslie Marmon Silko, *Almanac of the Dead* (1991)

In my endeavours to trace the manifestations of coloniality across literary spaces, this thesis has crossed three major fields of enquiry: Indigenous studies, post/de-colonial theory and African studies. I have also brought together theoretical approaches from world literature and memory studies, bringing them to bear on the specific contexts of contemporary Native American and South African literatures. Through engaging with a range of interdisciplinary fields, I have outlined a new approach to reading through an ethic of relationality. Relationality here enables us to understand Native American and South African literatures in relation to one another, revealing connections both implicit and explicit. In my introduction, I made the argument that post/de-colonial, Indigenous and African studies must be brought into dialogue in order to better understand how literature can be used to resist ongoing forms of colonial oppression. Part of this work involves extending the limits of what we consider 'postcolonial' and 'Indigenous' in the context of a global arena in which these terms are differentially and unevenly applied. By bringing the work of Indigenous North American theorists such as Coulthard, TallBear and Vizenor to bear on South African literature, and the work of African scholars including Mbembe, Samuelson and Iheka on Native American literature, I have pointed not only to shared socio-political conditions across these contexts but also to the shared strategies being employed by authors producing literature within these spaces. One of my key motivations has been to demonstrate the pertinence of selected Indigenous theoretical approaches to the South African context, and of particular African and postcolonial theoretical approaches to Native American contexts. By centring coloniality, this project has brought together two corpuses of literature that have seldom been considered in the same frame, demonstrating how Native American and South African works of fiction can productively be read together and illuminated in the process. I have foregrounded responses to conditions of racial, gendered and environmental forms of

injustice to argue that distinct experiences of colonial violence under capitalist globalization should be understood as fundamentally interconnected. Across the chapters of this thesis, parallels and contrasts have been drawn between different postcolonial contexts to enable a more holistic understanding of how modern day colonial violence takes shape and, crucially, is being resisted. Through the original readings of text that I have produced, I have suggested that the formal and thematic strategies employed by selected Native American and South African authors comprise a shared grammar for resistance.

Despite being ubiquitous, coloniality is often rendered invisible in literary, cultural and political discourses. Whether through processes of disremembering perpetuated through the Western archive or through commodified simulations of authenticity, modernity necessarily works to obfuscate coloniality and its associated conditions of violence. While this process is characteristic of settler colonialism, which works to disavow its own imperial origins, it can be more accurately understood as an integral part of coloniality: such processes of erasure continue to manifest after colonialism has ostensibly ended, though they may take a different shape. Nevertheless, in spite of this invisibility, coloniality shapes political, cultural and literary life. It plays an indisputable role in material and epistemological practices of capitalist development, nation-building and environmental management. It also infiltrates the intimate contours of embodied life, locating bodies within categories according to race, gender and sexuality. Within the public sphere, coloniality reinforces racialised, patriarchal, heteronormative and anthropocentric power structures and preserves the institutions that reproduce them. In turn, it reverberates at a level that is both deeply individual and ontological. As I have demonstrated in this thesis, research that reveals the enduring presence of coloniality in the contexts of the United States and South Africa can deepen our understanding of the multitudinous ways it continues to inform conditions of subjugation in these spaces.

A discourse centred on indigeneity or postcoloniality is valuable yet limited. As I have shown, the siloing that is produced through processes of categorization prevents productive connections from being made between certain peoples, cultures and literatures. This thesis has read Native American and South African literatures together by tracing how authors negotiate the logic of coloniality that informed historical processes of European imperial expansion and continues to shape contemporary experiences under the capitalist world-system. Though the United States is rarely incorporated into postcolonial studies frameworks, there are recent studies that have employed coloniality specifically as a lens through which to study American literature.[114] Hosam M. Aboul-Ela uses Mignolo's

[114] There are notable exceptions to this, as I noted in the introduction to this thesis. Scholars including Amy Kaplan, Donald E. Pease and Deborah L. Madsen have challenged postcolonial studies' omission

theoretical work to analyse the colonial status of the American South in the work of William Faulkner (2007), while Rebecca Fuchs employs (de)coloniality in a Caribbean context, through a reading of *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* (2014) by American-Dominican author Junot Díaz. However, until now, coloniality has seldom been used in Native American literary criticism. As I have shown through my analysis of Native American novels, this concept allows us to understand the entangled legacies of colonialism in North America, placing the experiences of Native Americans in dialogue with those of other colonised peoples. As an area for future study, it would be valuable to consider how authors from particular groups differentially engage with coloniality in their work, particularly when they ostensibly occupy the same space (such as the nation state). Native American and African American experiences, for example, differ greatly, but coloniality may well provide a useful tool with which to read their literatures together. Similarly, while the continuing colonial legacies in post-apartheid South Africa have been theorised through a lens of coloniality by scholars including Maldonado-Torres, this approach has as of yet not been taken up by literary scholars.[115] Subsequently, there is much more work to be done to consider the ways that (de)coloniality can be brought to bear on different forms of South African writing.

Coloniality, as I have demonstrated, has been and continues to be a major preoccupation for Native American and South African authors. The chapters of this thesis have demonstrated three different ways of engaging with the problem of coloniality. Rather than situating the novels in relation to their dates of publication, I have instead produced a chronology that locates the narratives in terms of their temporal engagements with coloniality and their interrogations of how it can be unsettled. In Chapter One, through a reading of novels by Wicomb and Erdrich, I examined how coloniality manipulates the past through the archive. Through processes of (de)selection, the archive enables the nation state to establish itself as an imagined entity. This is a cross-temporal process; only through narrativising the past is the nation able to secure its own futurity. Through interrogating shared strategies employed in *The Plague of Doves* and *David's Story*, such as acts of narrative refusal and critical fabulation, I detailed how Erdrich and Wicomb's literary engagements with archival processes cohere to disavow the politics of recognition that characterises the contemporary multicultural dialogue of both the United States and South Africa. This led me to question what decolonial engagements with the archive might look like if the Western

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of the United States and asserted the need to attend to imperialism in any analysis of American literature and culture. For further reading see *Cultures of United States Imperialism* (Kaplan and Pease, 1993) and *Beyond the Borders: American literature and post-colonial theory* (Madsen, 2003).

[115] For further reading see Maldonado-Torres, 'Outline of Ten Theses on Coloniality and Decoloniality', which emphasises the role of the youth in South African decolonial movements, specifically around efforts to "complete the process of formal desegregation of higher education and to participate in a project of social, economic, and cognitive decolonization" (4).

concept of the archive is rooted in a logic of coloniality. Following my discussion of Wicomb and Erdrich's novels, it is evident that a decolonial archival approach is not merely about recovering counterhistories that have been rendered unspeakable in the public sphere, but also about unsettling the epistemologies and systems of value that the archive produces.

My second chapter focused on the way that the novel is being used to assert a resistance not only to colonialism and its legacies but to the neoliberal order that is its new inscription. This chapter moved away from a focus on the nation state to consider how repressive narratives of indigeneity are perpetuated through global capitalist processes of commodification, in ways that inform and uphold settler colonial structures by contributing to the exploitation and continued dispossession of marginalised groups. Identifying shared strategies and tropes employed by King and Mda, my analysis of *Truth and Bright Water* and *The Heart of Redness* examined how both authors employ variations of strategic exoticism to reveal and unsettle the colonial logics that exist within and motivate the global tourism and literary industries. Yet, reading the trope of the ecologically noble Indian in Mda's framing of Khoi indigeneity, I argued for the necessity to consider how transcultural expressions of resistance can be implicated in violent processes that reinscribe gendered and racialised narratives of repressive authenticity.

In my third chapter, I argued that novels by Silko and Duiker employ relational worldviews to imagine futures beyond coloniality/modernity. These texts are not only concerned with the future – indeed, *Almanac of the Dead* has the longest temporal focus of any of the novels in this study. However, both of these novels are notable for the way in which they recover pre-colonial onto-epistemologies in a way that is explicitly future-oriented, in order to disavow an imminent capitalist future of anthropogenic environmental catastrophe. At the level of both form and narrative diegesis, each articulates the radical interrelationality of all life on the planet. In doing so, Duiker and Silko directly disrupt the hierarchical modes of categorization that coloniality depends upon. If we understand the strategy of defining to be an integral aspect of coloniality, Silko and Duiker's subversion of such processes becomes inherently decolonial. Locating the human and non-human into dynamic and affective processes of kinship registers the animacy of all beings, particularly those that have historically been de-animated according to categories of race, gender, sexuality and species. By registering this animacy each unsettles the capitalist logic that understands Nature as a resource to be freely exploited for the benefit of a select Humanity. In no uncertain terms, Silko and Duiker's novels assert that the hope for decolonial futurity on a planetary scale, lies in moving beyond such modes of categorization, through recognising modes of relationality, through (re)making kin. Reading the novels in this order has allowed me to move from the ways that Native American and South African authors are

not only unsettling colonial pasts and presents, but how they provoke us to reconsider our understandings of futurity. Employing the power of narratives, whether through pre-colonial worldviews or historic memories of resistance, Silko and Duiker demonstrate how the past and future are always entangled, existing in radical relation to one another.

Following the discussion of relationality raised in my final chapter, I posit that this concept allows us to re-evaluate the animacy of the novel itself. Through articulating the relationality of our world, stories can and do enact processes of connectivity. Drawing on the work of Chen, in my final chapter I suggested that stories can be understood as animate forces. This framing echoes the words of Yoeme in *Almanac,* who believes that "power resides within certain stories"; their transformative capacity lies in their retelling, with which "a slight but permanent shift [takes] place" (Silko, 581). As a material form that brings diverse peoples and cultures into dynamic relation with one another, the novel can be understood as an animated object of relationality. Conceptualising it as such enables us to expand our understanding of the possibilities that the novel offers for facilitating exchange between different groups. This function of the novel should be understood as an extension of the significant role that storytelling has always occupied within Native American and South African cultures. While not historically situated within a Euroamerican tradition of print culture, Native American and South African cultures have always employed the power of storytelling for anti-colonial resistance. Specifically by adapting the form of the novel in dialogue with local cultural traditions and socio-political concerns, authors have both raised awareness of and articulated opposition to conditions of subjugation, as well as expressed solidarity with other groups. As discussed in my third chapter, such expressions of solidarity are often rooted in a multidirectional understanding of memory that disavows a competitive model of collective memory. Instead of pitting different experiences of colonial violence against one another, in competition to ascertain which group has suffered the most, the novels within this study strive to create space for distinct conditions of suffering. Accordingly, they recognise the global structures that result in local conditions of subjugation. The novels included in this study also foreground points of connection between historic and continued forms of resilience and resistance between distinct groups. As such, they articulate the need to move beyond a discourse that solely emphasises traumatic memories at the expense of the other forms of memory. As shown through my discussion of *Almanac*, Silko's narrative envisages the potential for memories of historic acts of resistance to be re-animated in the present in the service of negotiating alternative futures.

This emphasis on forms of resistance is significant, for narratives of indigeneity – like those of South African experiences – are all too frequently characterised by narratives of trauma. As Belcourt notes, "'massive genocidal violence' stalks indigeneity, as if death and

indigeneity were co-constitutive categories" (58). Belcourt asserts that this association is not necessarily problematic, pointing to the productive work that can be achieved by "reworking the codes of bad affect". By placing Indigenous suffering into the public sphere we make it speakable and in doing so reveal the new machinations of settler colonial structures of violence. However, as Vizenor has long observed, narratives of Indigenous peoples are too frequently marked by tragedy, dominance, and victimry. Such narratives do not serve to make Indigenous suffering speakable, but instead perpetuate stereotypical tragic figures, such as the 'noble savage', and the rhetoric that frames Indigenous peoples as a vanishing race. Accordingly, while I am cognizant of the need to make conditions of suffering speakable and, in doing so, name the structures that are complicit in enabling the continuation of colonial violence, I also necessarily emphasise survivance and other forms of resistance. By identifying shared formal strategies and thematic engagements across texts, we can understand the novel as a site that facilitates the negotiation of these tensions.

One way in which relationality is often evoked is through the use of intertextuality. In *David's Story* and *Almanac of the Dead,* as discussed, Wicomb and Silko both employ intertextual references to Morrison's *Beloved,* creating a dialogue between their individual communities and African American experiences of subjugation. For Wicomb, this is rooted in a shared African experience of suffering as a consequence of colonialism, while Silko underscores the shared oppression that followed the colonial foundation of the United States, a country built on the genocide of Indigenous peoples and the labour of African slaves. However, I have also pointed to examples of how these novels work to understand communities and cultures in relation to one another *outside of* colonial experiences of subjugation. This is a driving force of the decolonial aesthetics of *Almanac* and *Quiet Violence.* Silko and Duiker's novels foreground the points of connection between pre-colonial African and Indigenous American onto-epistemologies, which are framed as another basis for solidarity and productive exchange.

Understanding the novel as a relational object relies not only on its contents but also on its ability to circulate across nations, cultures and languages – a process that is largely made possible through the world-literary system. Though literature frequently registers (already existing or potential) dynamics of relationality at the level of form or theme, this is not strictly necessary for the relational potential of the novel to be realised. Rather, through circulation, the novel can act as a vehicle for disruption by *producing* relationality in the way that it communicates alternative knowledges and ways of being to global audiences. The transformative potential of the novel can be further understood through the concept of subaltern cosmopolitanism, whereby groups are able to "use to their benefit the capabilities for transnational interaction created by the world system" (Santos, 180). While periodicals

such as the *Cherokee Phoenix* and *Drum* in the nineteenth and mid-twentieth centuries employed this strategy at regional scales, in the contemporary moment selected Native American and South African novels have a distinctly global reach with a larger readership than ever before. This is something that the authors themselves are cognizant of and, indeed, play with, as I argued in my analysis of *The Heart of Redness* and *Truth and Bright Water*. Following my discussion in Chapter Two, there is then a tension between the uneven, colonial power dynamics of accessibility that the literary industry perpetuates and the simultaneous opportunities offered by the novel form to facilitate connection and expressions of solidarity, as seen in *Almanac*.

World literature scholarship has recently begun to address the potential of literature as a connective force, even in terms of its potential to reorient the self in relation to time and space. Cheah employs the term 'world-making' to understand how, through temporalization, literature works to remind us of that which exists outside of the individual. Defining the world as "a form of relating, belonging, or being-with", Cheah argues that world literature should be understood "as literature that is *of* the world, something that can play a fundamental role and be a force in the ongoing cartography and creation of the world instead of a body of timeless aesthetic objects" (*What is a World?,* 42). Cheah suggests that the "opening" of a world that world literature enables "puts all beings into relation": without this, he argues, "we would not have access to other beings and no value could be formed" (9). Cheah's conceptualization of how world literature places all beings into relation echoes Whitt, whose work on Indigenous forms of knowledge speaks of the relational power of stories. Whitt posits that

> Stories are acts of the imagination that enable us to enact and reenact experience. One source of their richness as pedagogical vehicles is that they permit us some access to the perspectives of other beings, often those very different from ourselves. We come to know them by relating ourselves to them, by imagining what it is like to be them and to experience the world – including ourselves – through them (35).

By registering the relational power of stories, epitomised through the circulating materiality of the novel, we can conceptualise how literary texts disrupt our most homely conceptions by revealing the multitudinous ways in which we relate to human and non-human others. This is a vital component of the unsettling work they carry out. Identifying this function of the novel allows us to better understand the potential of literature to bring into being new forms of solidarity. For Butler, an ethics of precarity is dependent on the notion that a group is more ethically responsive to those that are known to them. Her call for "new coalitions"

calls for the constant expansion of the boundaries of the 'we', a process that involves destabilising what this construct entails in order to incorporate more beings into this space of ethical obligation (Butler, *Frames of War,* 32). As Butler writes: "The 'we' does not, and cannot, recognize itself [...] it is riven from the start, interrupted by alterity [...] and the obligations 'we' have are precisely those that disrupt any established notion of the 'we'" (14). By emphasising relationality as an inherent condition, literature facilitates the disruption of the stable group identity, finding new ways to position us in relation to those that we (think we) know and those that we do not. Accordingly, the novel carries the potential to help bring into being new coalitions that are rooted in an awareness of relationality and, with it, the need for ethical reciprocity. Foregrounding such forms of relating or being-with are positive and necessary, not only to create networks of solidarity between dispossessed or marginalised peoples, but to demand that those who perceive themselves as culturally, geographically or temporally 'removed' re-assess their own entanglement within structures of power.

By registering dynamics of relationality, literature helps us to understand the ways that we are implicated in the struggles and experiences of others, which in turn enables us to more effectively understand and enact solidarity. This is not only the case between dispossessed and marginalised groups, but also for 'elite' readers who may be implicated in histories of violence, often in hidden ways. *David's Story,* for example, uncovers Scottish colonial legacies that Wicomb ties to the transatlantic subjugation of African peoples throughout history and in the present. Connectedly, as discussed in Chapter Two, *The Heart of Redness* and *Truth and Bright Water* gesture towards the complicity of global subjects within processes of capitalist commodification via the tourist and literary industries. To better formulate how literature can carry out this work, I turn to Rothberg's work in *The Implicated Subject,* which posits a new theory of political responsibility to move beyond a binary of perpetrator and victim. Those that Rothberg describes as implicated subjects, "occupy positions aligned with power and privilege without being themselves direct agents of harm; they contribute to, inhabit, inherit, or benefit from regimes of domination but do not originate or control such regimes" (*The Implicated Subject,* 1). As he argues, although by indirect means, "implicated subjects help propagate the legacies of historical violence and prop up structures of inequality that mar the present" (1). Accordingly, he formulates that modes of implication are essential to confront in the pursuit of justice, arguing that this reconceptualization enables individuals to recover agency as catalysts for change.

While Rothberg's primary emphasis is on contested zones, including post-apartheid South Africa and Israel/Palestine, he gestures towards how this framing can be expanded to consider implication in terms of a global scope. He notes that while "[p]rivileged consumers in the Global North are not […] 'perpetrators' of exploitation" they *can* be described as

implicated subjects, as "participants in and beneficiaries of a system that generates dispersed and unequal experiences of trauma and well-being simultaneously" (12). Following Mamdani, Rothberg's emphasis on *beneficiaries* rather than *perpetrators* offers a productive shift. Mamdani asks: "What would social justice mean in the South African context, where perpetrators are few but beneficiaries many […] Which is more difficult: to live with *past* perpetrators of an evil, or its *present* beneficiaries?" (cited in *The Implicated Subject,* 16). As well as being employed to consider the responsibility of the descendants of European settlers in the United States and South Africa, this framework can also be brought to bear on the question of our collective responsibility for exacerbating forms of environmental degradation. Particularly, we can consider the 'beneficiaries' of the Global North: whose lifestyles are dependent on the consumption of excessive levels of carbon, thereby contributing to the environmental precarity that disproportionately affects Indigenous and other peripheral communities. The concept of the implicated subject, then, offers a productive way in which to re-evaluate the question of complicity and, consequently, responsibility in relation to exploitative global practices and structures of inequality. As discussed in Chapter Two, the touristic industry is a clear example of how individuals can indirectly contribute towards colonial structures of erasure and expropriation without directly benefiting from these processes materially (for example, through wealth or land), though this in itself raises the idea of 'cultural' beneficiaries. Though they clearly depart from other, more direct beneficiaries of implication, as Mda and King's novels demonstrate, global tourists – and, indeed, readers – are nevertheless entangled in structures of colonial violence.

In light of this, what does it mean to be implicated as a reader? To understand one's own implication requires attending carefully to the question of positionality and being attuned to the entangled power dynamics that result from hierarchies rooted in racial, gendered, and socio-economic differences, to just name a few. It is not as easy as picking up a book and recognising the struggle of a specific group or the conditions of violence to which they have been subjected. Rather, reading from the position of an implicated subject requires reflecting on one's own complicity and relation to historical and ongoing forms of violence. For some, this process may happen organically as a part of reading, however there are also novels that explicitly encourage this kind of reflection. *The Heart of Redness* and *Truth and Bright Water* carry out this work, as do a range of other texts. Jamaica Kincaid's polemic *A Small Place* (1988), which confronts the reader in a second-person narrative to reveal colonial legacies in Antigua, is a pertinent example of how non-fiction can effectively do this. Literature also offers the possibility for readers to escape the manipulation of historical memory carried out by the nation state, though literature itself is not exempt from these kinds of manipulation. Following my discussions of *David's Story* and *The Plague of Doves* in

Chapter One and *The Heart of Redness* and *Truth and Bright Water* in Chapter Two, literature cannot be simply read as cultural or historical artefact. Yet, it can reveal these processes of manipulation, as well as provide insight into alternative histories, knowledge systems and ways of being that allow us to expand on our own narrow experiences.

There are, however, still limitations associated with this. One possible criticism of Rothberg's work is that an emphasis on personal or individual responsibility takes us away from a necessary emphasis on collective action and the complicity of mass actors, including institutions, corporations and governments. Such an emphasis on the individual runs counter to the always-collective ethics of relationality, emphasised in the collected narratives that comprise *Almanac* and *Quiet Violence*. Following my analysis of these novels in Chapter Three, while reflecting on one's own implication in cycles of violence is indeed necessary work, any action in the pursuit of justice must necessarily be collective in order to be effective. Further, if literature can bring about the types of reflection that I have suggested, its potential for subversion is always complicated by its ties to networks of capital accumulation and circulation. While this raises a number of limitations, one key concern is the question of readership and which readers are able to access these works. Without circulation, the relational potential of the novel cannot be realised. Yet, how far is the subversive and, specifically, *subaltern cosmopolitan* potential of the novel to be realised if texts only reach an elite group of world readers? Subaltern cosmopolitanism, remember, necessitates the facilitation of global interactions connecting subaltern groups and struggles with one another. While, as I have noted, there is value in disrupting the worldviews and accordant preconceptions of readers who come from more privileged positions or, indeed, positions of subjectivity that are implicated in wider structures of violence, it is necessary to consider the systemic issues that render it difficult for a wider range of readers to access these works. This requires attending to questions of accessibility including, but not limited to, the language, geographical location, socio-economic status and literacy levels of possible readers. Many of these novels are only produced in English or other dominant global languages, which instantly excludes large numbers of potential readers. Further, even when people are able to access these books in terms of language, affordability and medium, the majority of people do not choose to invest in literary novels. This is true across the world. Across the so-called Global South, for example, self-help is amongst the most widely-read of genres.[116]

If we understand the novel as a relational object, then, this possibility is simultaneously *dependent on* and *limited by* the opportunities for circulation offered by the global literary industry. Furthermore, it is not just about who reads these literatures, but

[116] For further reading on the significance of the self-help genre, see Stephanie Newell on West Africa in *West African Literatures* (2006) and Robert Fraser on India in *Book History Through Postcolonial Eyes* (2008).

which authors and types of work are able to get published in the first place. Understanding this requires we consider the conditions that perpetuate uneven publishing practices, recognising literary production as part of a wider system of socio-economic of exchange. While local publishing houses and presses that publish in local languages offer some ways to ensure that a wider range of texts are published, while not necessarily meeting the demands of global publishing trends, there are similarly limitations associated with these avenues.[117] While I do not have space in this conclusion to interrogate these issues in detail, I highlight the urgency of Brouillette's provocation to develop a world-literary criticism that speaks "to an as yet extremely underdeveloped political economy of literary production, which would consider how labour, property and ownership work within the literary system, and how they impinge on the writing that exists" ('World Literature and Market Dynamics', 99).

In light of these realities, it is perhaps unsurprising that authors are increasingly looking beyond the novel towards other forms of cultural production. This is particularly the case across Africa, where Ashleigh Harris identifies a "movement away from the book-commodity as the dominant form of literary production", asserting that the "published book is an unsustainable form for Africa's literary future" (2). It is with this in mind that we can think about how alternative modes of literature and new technologies offer the potential to evade some of the limits associated with traditional publication practices. As the rate of sales of fiction are falling in South Africa, other forms of literary production are being more widely consumed.[118] For example, Harris points to the rise in online literary platforms that NGOs and grassroots initiatives are using to encourage literacy amongst South African youth. In addition, multilingual performance poetry is becoming increasingly popular, as a form that is more easily available for those who are unable to access books, for reasons ranging from unaffordability to differing levels of literacy. The rise of personal recording technologies and social media means that, whereas once these types of performances were only accessible to those in close geographical proximity, the spoken word poetry of today is being filmed and shared around the world. The viral videos of South African poet Maya Wegerif, for example, have the potential to reach far wider audiences than standardised modes of literary publication. While access is still here, of course, limited by factors including access to internet

[117] H. G. Toth provides an insightful summary of some of the issues facing local independent publishers, whose ability to facilitate the production and consumption of postcolonial discourses is always informed by Euroamerican publishing practices (2019).

[118] This downwards sales trend is demonstrated in the figures of Kwela Books, one of the largest South African publishing houses, whose sales dropped by more than half between 2015 (15,369 books sold) and 2017 (6,948 books sold). As Harris observes, these figures reflect a wider drop in fiction sales across the South African publishing industry. Self-publishing, however, is one area that appears to be on the rise. For further reading see Harris, 'Hot Reads, Pirate Copies, and the Unsustainability of the Book in Africa's Literary Future', pp.5-6.

and the required technologies, it is impossible to ignore the potential for new audiences made possible by these alternative literary forms.

As this is the first substantial study to examine Native American and South African literatures, I chose to structure the project around the novel: the literary form that has been most significant to the development of Native American and South African literary traditions since the mid-twentieth century. Limiting this study to the novel has been necessary in order to produce a focused comparative study. Yet, there are also issues associated with this. In a thesis committed to destabilising boundaries and decentring Euro-centric thought, it perhaps seems imprudent to employ a narrow frame of analysis in terms of a narrative form that is largely dependent on Euroamerican, market-enforced modes of literary categorization. While in part this narrow focus is a limitation of the current study, it also offers exciting possibilities for future research. As I have shown through the selected inclusion of poetry and short fiction extracts, there are a multitude of other literary forms being employed by South African and Native American authors that also carry out the work of unsettling that this study highlights. Much recent work that engages with the concerns of this study finds shape in poetry, short stories, memoir and – particularly in South Africa – spoken word, which recovers some of the oral traditions of local cultures. These alternative literary forms offer exciting avenues for research into the relational potential of literature, to foster new connections and modes of solidarity.

While this study is focused exclusively on Native American and South African literatures, it has been written with the understanding that the concerns at the heart of the research are found in numerous other spaces around the world. The violence at Standing Rock in 2016-7 and the 2012 massacre at Marikana can be connected to countless other incidents, where the interests of corporations and nation-states are placed ahead of human lives and non-human environments. In such instances, violence that is rooted in a logic of coloniality is perpetrated for the supposed benefit of a select Humanity. Those excluded from this category suffer – whether through the immediate violence of militarised state action, or the slow violence of oil spills, water pollution, and anthropogenic climate change. Across South America, environmental defenders are being killed in connection with developments led by multinational corporations; while in Flint, Michigan, African American communities are – at the time of writing – still without access to clean drinking water. My own work recognises these important ongoing realities, as well as the creative works that are being produced to address the multifaceted ways that coloniality shapes subjugation at simultaneously local, global and planetary scales. Research into how literature is being used to negotiate these conditions and the connections between them needs to continue. It is only

by bringing diverse ways of being, and writing, together that the planetary implications of coloniality can be understood and, ultimately, resisted.

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